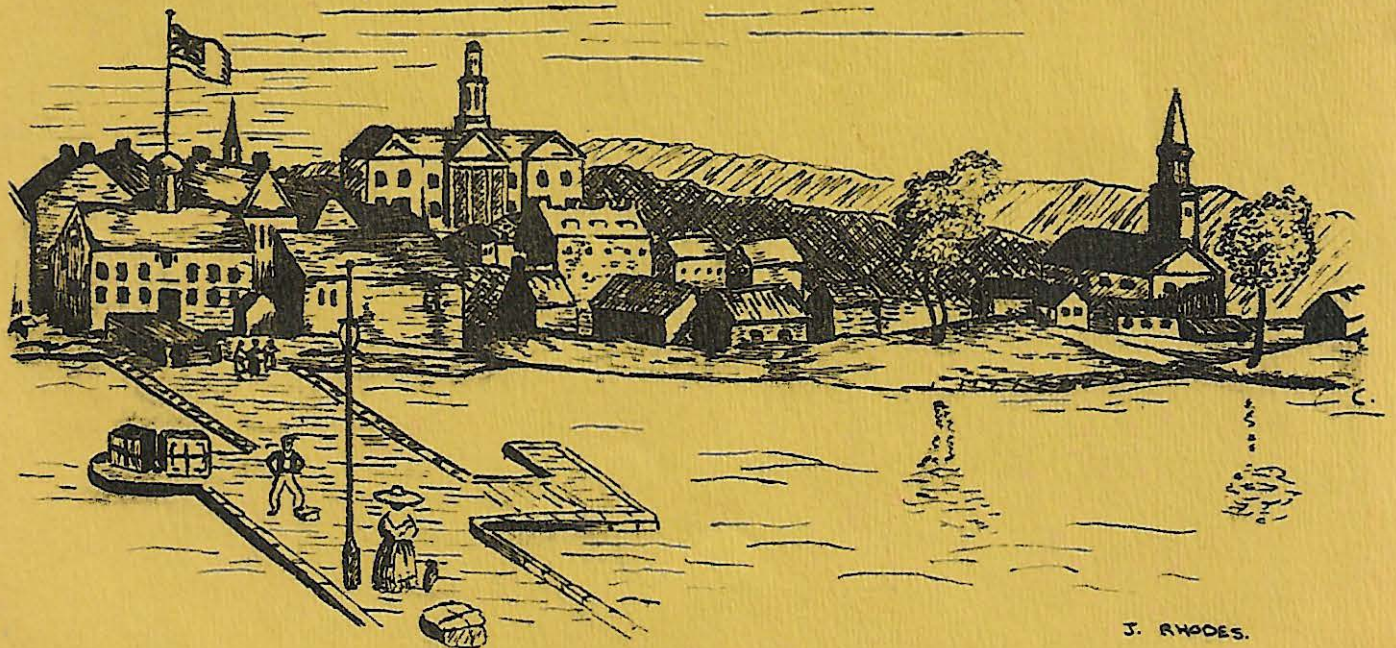


Cobourg and District  
Historical Society

# Historical Review

1980 - 1982

Vol. I





COBOURG AND DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Historical Review No. 1

1980--1982

Foreward

This Historical Review is an attempt to capture the essence of the presentations of local history to the Cobourg and District Historical Society during the first two seasons of its renewed existence. We hope that this will provide a permanent reminder of the richness of our local history.

We greatly appreciate the many people who have provided programs at our monthly meetings.

Many have helped in the production of this booklet in addition to the original speakers. Judy Rhodes, a student at Clarke High School has done a major share of the work. Judy is a grade 13 student who accepted the challenge of producing the Historical Review as part of the school's Co-operative Education Program. Judy also produced the sketches which accompany many of the articles. Charlotte Cockerill has helped in editing. Tony Weatherby and the Grade 10 Typewriting students of CDCI East have been responsible for the printing and duplication. We thank them all.

Peter Greathead

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June 2, 1980	American Summer Colony	Robert Mikel
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November 25, 1980	The Ontario Car Ferry Company Cobourg's Harbour Days	Peter Delanty Don Dawson Peter Greathead
January 27, 1981	Barnardo Children in Canada	Gail Corbett
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March 17, 1981	Local History Through Local Buildings	Marion Hagen Robert Mikel
April 28, 1981	Local Breweries and Distilleries	Laura Irvine
September 22, 1981	The Poplars Project	Robert Mikel
October 27, 1981	Cobourg and the Military: The First Hundred Years	Gordon King
November 24, 1981	History of Victoria College	Goldwin French
December 8, 1981	The Poplars Project and the Implications of a Local Museum	Dorothy Duncan Robert Mikel
January 26, 1982	Pre-1930 Cobourg Schools	Cynthia Lelliot
February 23, 1982	Conservation Techniques	(slide/tape)
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April 27, 1982	The Old Lady of Division Street and Her Rivals--Early Cobourg Newspapers	Foster Russell

Anecdotes

Oct. 20, 1980	The House That Moved	Lois Anne Verney
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Jan. 27, 1981	Cobourg Hospitality	Betty Tait
Feb. 17, 1981	The Well at the Four Corners	Gordon King
Mar. 17, 1981	Fire at the Four Corners	Muriel Winter
Apr. 28, 1981	The Prince of Wales Opens Victoria Hall	Charles Hagen
May 19, 1981	Amherst	Percy Climo
Nov. 24, 1981	The Illumination of Victoria College	Marion Hagen
Jan. 26, 1982	Snippets from School Records	Gordon Nelson
Mar. 16, 1982	Royal Proclamation in Cobourg	Percy Climo

PLEASE NOTE: The sketches in this booklet have been prepared by Judy Rhodes from old prints, postcards and other sources.



## Tribute to Lenah Field Fisher

by Dr. Fred G. Robertson

The Cobourg and District Historical Society would like to pay tribute to Mrs. Lenah Field Fisher, known affectionately as "Lenah". Her significant and outstanding accomplishments are numerous and well-known to most citizens of Cobourg. In addition to her achievements as a 16-year member of the Town Council, four of which were spent as Deputy Reeve, and her enormous contribution to the restoration of Victoria Hall, she was made a member of the Order of Canada.

Lenah was a member of the Town Council when it was discovered that Victoria Hall was in such bad condition that its safety was in question. Some citizens suggested that it should be torn down, but Lenah led the fight to save it. She helped form the Society for the Restoration of Victoria Hall and worked unceasingly in a financial way. Even today she continues to support it, as her will provides that Victoria Hall is to receive not only a generous bequest of money and antique furniture but also the remainder of her estate. It is fitting that the foyer in Victoria Hall will bear her name.

During her 16 years on Council, Lenah did much to further the development of our town. It was she who urged the formation of the Transit Bus Service in Cobourg. She took an active interest in the welfare of the senior citizens and did a great deal of work for the residents of the Golden Plough Lodge. Any good cause received her enthusiastic support. She was a great attraction at County Council and represented our town well. She did appear in some outlandish costumes, as she herself admitted. "The boys wanted me to do this," she would say.

Although defeated in 1976, Lenah never lost interest in the town and she became involved in other ways. She was one of those who attended the founding meeting of this Society. Perhaps one reason for her defeat was the fact that she supported the restoration of Victoria Hall as many citizens were opposed to it. Even today, some people question the



wisdom of restoring Victoria Hall although that number is diminishing as more and more citizens are taking pride in our fine Town Hall. For certain, in thirty to fifty years everyone will agree it is a wonderful building and will give full credit to us for restoring it.

Lenah did receive recognition for her excellent community service when she was made a member of the Order of Canada. She was the first and until now the only resident of our district to receive this high honour. She received many letters of congratulations from her friends in Canada and other countries, all pleased that she had been so honoured.

Lenah had other achievements. She began the Marie Dressler Tea House. Starting from scratch, she made it into one of the finest eating houses in Canada and people from our own country and abroad returned time and again to dine there. She became a governor of Sir Sanford Fleming College and took a keen interest in its progress. She was a world traveller and visited Italy and Russia in recent years. She planned to travel to China a few years ago but was denied this because of her age: there was an age limit as to who could go.

Lenah was a long time supporter of the Chamber of Commerce and the development of tourism in our area. The list of her activities and accomplishments is seemingly endless.

What kind of woman was Lenah? Although small in stature, she was big in courage. Once she made up her mind to support a cause, nothing deterred her. She was kind and generous. Her friends and neighbours knew that well. Many times when someone in a family became ill they would receive some tastily prepared dish that would appeal to their failing appetite. She was flamboyant, taking great pleasure in ridiculous hats and extremely colourful clothes which were, in fact, often quite shocking. However, Lenah always knew what was correct for special occasions. When she was presented to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth, she was a model of simple and dignified dress.

Lenah had a good sense of humour and could laugh at herself. She loved children and could relate to them. Consequently, they were fond of her. She always seemed young.



Cobourg and district did appreciate Lenah. There was much concern among our citizens when they heard of her illness and much sadness at her death. Her funeral was attended by many sorrowing friends. Many have paid tribute to her, and her life was well spent.

Kipling, in the last four lines of his immortal poem "If" expresses our appreciation of her life. Many of you may remember these lines:

"If you can fill the unforgiving minute  
With sixty seconds worth of distance run,  
Yours is the earth and everything that's in it  
And what is more--you'll be a man, my son."

For Lenah the last line would read, "You were a wonderful woman, Lenah." Lenah has left us but her good works live on.



S.R.

Cobourg Beach Scene  
from Picturesque Canada

## American Summer Colony

by Robert Mikel

It is difficult to imagine that only 60 years ago Cobourg was an internationally known summer resort for the very wealthy. The unique lifestyle Cobourg achieved during this time was unparalleled by any other town of its size and, for that matter, by many larger centers.

In the 1860's several Pittsburgh steel capitalists became interested in the Cobourg and Peterborough Railway, which at the time was nearing financial collapse. The Americans later purchased controlling shares in the operation and in 1867 reorganized the system into the Cobourg-Marmora Railway and Mining Company, the group having also purchased the iron Mines at Blairton and Marmora.

The principal shareholder seems to have been George K. Shoenberger, whose family at the time was one of the wealthiest in the State of Pennsylvania. After the reorganization of the railway company, Shoenberger appointed his son-in-law, Colonel William Chambliss, as managing director of the new firm. The Pittsburgh industrialists had been interested in the Marmora mines but no economical mode of transportation existed to carry the ore to Pittsburg.

By restoring the Cobourg Railway, ore was easily brought back from Marmora to Cobourg, then taken by ferry to Rochester and to Pittsburgh by railway.

Chambliss readily perceived the advantages of climate, beauty and situation the town possessed over other small centres. He found the British and aristocratic character of Cobourg to be impressive and he soon became friendly with its inhabitants. Chambliss proposed the idea of building a large first-class hotel in Cobourg, suitable in taste and comfort for his own American friends and others of similar wealth who were looking for an attractive site in which to spend the summer. The response was enthusiastic. A Hotel Committee was formed, the product of which was the erection of the Arlington House in 1874. This large hotel, by far



the grandest between Montreal and Toronto, boasted of over 150 handsomely furnished rooms. Its opening in April of 1874 was witnessed by over 400 people from as far as Montreal, Toronto, Pittsburgh and New York. By 1876 the venture was making a large profit, while providing the town with an additional \$10,000.00 in extra business. Chambliss and a Cobourg physician travelled to major cities promoting the town by advertising its salubrious atmosphere which, they said, had the second highest ozone content in the world. At the time, ozone was considered very beneficial to one's health. This and the generally pleasant nature of society in Cobourg soon brought families by the dozens to spend their summers in this charming community. Other hotels were built or renovated to accommodate the overflow of guests wishing to stay at the Arlington, where reservations had to be made a year in advance. Guests included Civil War Veterans from the north and south and families of old wealth from all over North America, including such centres as New Orleans, Washington, D.C., St. Louis, Cincinnati, New York, Pittsburg, Montreal and Toronto. The confederate officers liked Cobourg because they could escape the stifling heat of the south without spending time or money in the northern states.

While the lifestyle of the summer colony was often lavish and rich, it did not have the fast-paced atmosphere that characterized its later period. For the first 15 years the visitors led a hotel-oriented existence. For up to three months during the summer they lived at the hotel and held most activities such as dances, "hops" or soirees there. The visitors quickly became friendly with many Cobourg families, including the Armours, Boswells, Beattys, Daintrys and Crusos, who held parties for their American friends. The popularity of Cobourg was such that families came back year after year, many for well over twenty consecutive summers.

Around 1890 several summer residents began to rent and purchase homes around the town. These houses were at first quite small, but the need for larger ones increased as the desire for larger entertainments grew. It was at this time that a much wealthier group began to frequent the town for

the summer months. They came principally from Pittsburgh and had made huge fortunes in the industrial boom after the Civil War. During the 1890's these two groups blended and both began to construct summer homes.

The Ladds of Texas purchased and enlarged Heathcote, originally owned by Mrs. Agnes Heath; the Cornell family from Buffalo bought Colonel Chambliss's home in 1890. Signor & Madame Albertini purchased the adjoining estate 3 years later, which they named "Interlaken". They were followed by Mrs. Wells from St. Louis who renovated "Hamilton House", the Sartoris family who bought "The Hill", and a host of others who built large and expensive estates in and around Cobourg.

One of the last summer houses was the Franklin Abbott house, "The Brick Yard", built around 1913, long after the summer house boom. The Blaffer family built an imposing home north of Grafton. A few families decided to locate in Port Hope.

By the turn of the century the lifestyle of the town had become quite lavish. For entertainment there were large dinner parties, Saturday night "hops" as well as masquerades and book parties. The first book party was held in the 1890's at the Arlington, with an attendance of over 130 invited guests dressed as their favourite books. Prizes were awarded for the various costumes. Mr. Eugene Carrington won the award for "Most obscure". He represented the book "Hard Cash" by pinning one silver dollar to his coat. Miss Louett received a prize representing "A Brave Woman." She wore a costume covered with lizards, frogs and snakes and her hair was adorned with bats.

Garden parties were extremely popular. These gatherings, held amid the park-like grounds of an estate, were often attended by as many as 200 people. They were usually formal affairs. On Saturday evenings when the Arlington held its grand "hop" the townspeople would gather outside the hotel to watch the bejewelled guests arrive in their carriages. Small children would peek in the windows to watch the elegant happenings but were soon chased away by hotel staff.



During the 1890's amateur theatricals became favorite amusements. They were usually by the Cornells and Albertinis who were avid amateur performers. Colonel Cornell had a private theatre in his houses both at Buffalo and Cobourg. Madame Albertini herself had once been a renowned opera singer. Their productions in Cobourg were generally light comic farces, musicals or suitable burlesques of famous operas. While many were private, most theatricals were performed in the opera house at Victoria Hall or in St. Peter's Church to raise money for worthy charities.

Although the summer colony never achieved the level of ostentation that some resorts of the period did, their amusements were none the less lavish. One woman recounted that during one period of the summer she attended a dinner party every night for two consecutive weeks. Dinner parties could, of course, be quite lively. At a dinner hosted by Colonel Cornell, a guest chanced to mention he was interested in buying a horse. Another guest at the table, Dolf Brunet, immediately offered to sell him a very fine horse which he indicated he owned. The other guest expressed his keen interest and replied he would like to see the horse. Brunet said that would not be necessary since he could describe the horse in detail, which he proceeded to do. The guest was impressed but he still wanted to see the horse. At this Brunet became very irritated and pointed out there was no need to see it since he had describe it so well. The other remained adamant, at which point Brunet, who was of Latin extraction, went into a towering rage, forcing Colonel Cornell to step in and send the other guest home. He felt his honour had been greatly impugned. "Dolf," said Colonel Cornell, "you know perfectly well you don't even own a horse!" "Yes," replied Brunet "Zat is true I do not own a horse. But zat is not the question. Ze point is he doubt my vord."

Most dinner parties ended at the card tables where both poker and bridge were favourites. In the early years of the summer colony the stakes could be quite high. Professional

gamblers often frequented the town inducing willing participants into a game. One man was reputed to have lost his house at a game. Later the stakes became much less serious, particularly in poker where they were low and every hand had at least one wild card.

Weddings were by far the most popular events among the summer residents. Here in their picturesque surroundings amid acres of beautifully kept lawns and gardens, young brides were given a splendid send-off. There were grand events put on at enormous expense, which, in some cases, over 400 people attended.

Sporting activities were popular distractions for the vacationing Americans. Horses and riding had always been pleasures and when the Cobourg horse show was inaugurated it rapidly became the focal point of the summer. During the last two weeks, houses were filled to capacity with guests, the gardens were decorated with lanterns, and lavish entertainments were the norm. The Cobourg Horse Show became famous for its high standard of competition and as a social event. It continued well into the twenties except for a few years during World War I. Later it was replaced by annual polo matches with teams from Toronto, Montreal, Rochester and one from England. The players were often billeted in the homes of the summer residents.

Golf too, became extremely popular at the turn of the century and it was with the help of these summer residents that the town was able to establish such a fine Golf Club. It too quickly became a social centre, particularly during the twenties. At least one grand dance was held at the Club House each year. Luigi Romanelli and his orchestra would be brought down for the occasion. These events were very exclusive and combined permanent citizens and summer residents. About one A.M., when Romanelli was about to pack up, a crowd of summer residents would make their entrance, having just been to several cocktail and dinner parties. The hat would be passed to induce the orchestra to stay. One woman pointed out that "Romanelli didn't stay for peanuts." Having completed the musical arrangements, the party danced

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the night away until dawn when a breakfast party was hastily arranged.

During the twenties, the character of the summer colony changed greatly. World War I upset the entire social structure. Changing ideas and economic conditions made it impossible to maintain the house staffs necessary for such a life style. Some households had employed as many as 21 servants. The summer families after World War I found it necessary to take a much more active role in their business to keep their fortunes. They were required to stay close to their home centre and as a result, the summer colony declined drastically in numbers during the twenties. By the thirties, only those who owned summer homes remained. Nothing signified the end of the summer colony more than the closing of the Arlington sometime in the early 20's and its eventual demolition. For roughly 50 years it had been not only the geographical centre of the colony but also its heart.

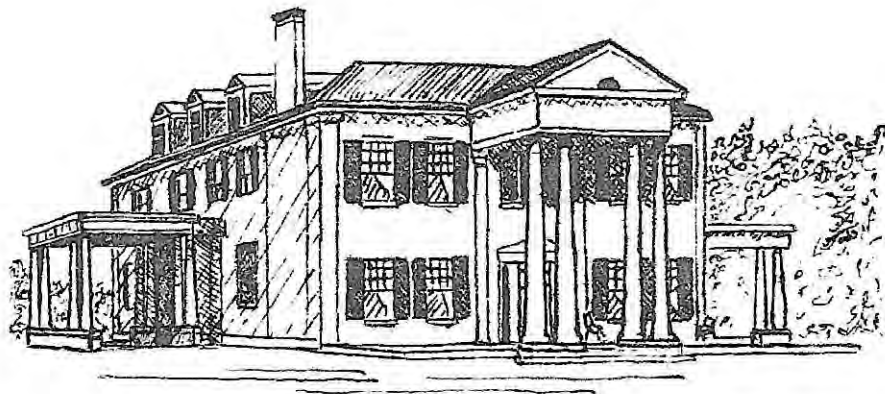
Nevertheless, Cobourg in the twenties was still a popular resort for the wealthy and, while its lifestyle was not as ostentatious as that characterized in novels by F. Scott Fitzgerald, there were many parallels. The summer colony was much less formal and of a much faster pace. The garden parties of the prewar period were replaced by cocktail parties. Dusenbergs Stutz-Bearcats, and Mercedes replaced the horse and carriage as the popular mode of transportation. With the onslaught of cars came a popular pastime called the treasure hunt, where clues were hidden throughout the town guiding a group to the finish. Carloads of people literally raced through the town in search of these clues.

Dinner parties remained popular and eventful. At one dinner party where dancing was to occur afterwards, the hostess had her pool filled with flowers to surround a large raft supporting the orchestra. Chinese lanterns were hung around the hedges. The result was an elegant and picturesque spot for dancing. The event was quite formal though the men for the most part did not wear tuxedos. Everything went well until one woman decided to cool off and dived into the pool

in her formal attire. She was followed by several others who, like herself, headed for the raft and, in the following excitement, tipped the whole orchestra into the pool. The party naturally made quite a splash!

In the late twenties or early thirties, the summer colony decided to make a movie using Cobourg as its back drop. Equipment was apparently rented from Hollywood and Lolly Oliver was cast as the star. The ferryboat was rented at great expense for one day and taken into the lake to shoot some scenes; however, the cameraman had forgotten to load the camera. They later shot water scenes in the harbour.

During the 1930's and 1940's the summer colony dwindled, dying a slow death as families eventually sold out or died. In the sixties Cobourg hosted fabulous auctions as the houses were finally sold and their contents put up for sale and so passed an era of glamour, prestige and fabulous wealth.



Ravensworth,  
built by the  
Fitzhugh  
family in  
1902



Strathmore  
remodelled  
by Charles  
Donnelly in  
1904



## LOCAL BREWERIES AND DISTILLERIES

by Laura Irvine

Brewing and distilling were very common and profitable industries in the past. Alcohol served as a preservative, an antiseptic, a market for off-grade crops and a soother for the rigours and realities of a rugged life for the early farmer. Such could be expected in the New World and was the case here in Cobourg.

The brewing of beer may have been encouraged as a means of treating water that wasn't pure or did not taste good. As well, it was a natural consequence of an agricultural society. Barley and hops, the raw materials needed for brewing, were among the farmer's products and thus he frequently made his own beer, called root beer or bark beer.

Canada's first brewery was established by the Jesuits of Quebec in 1668. They were actually trying to promote a beverage of "moderation". An early brewery needed to be located as near as possible to a water supply. Not only was water the essential ingredient in beer, but it was required to power the machinery of the brewery and later, when steam power was developed, it was needed for cooling purposes and to run the boilers. Being located on a body of water meant immediate transportation for the finished product. It was also preferable that a railroad be nearby for transportation.

Early distilleries were often established in connection with grist mills. The poorer grades of grain, such as wheat that had been spoiled by frost, or any surplus of better grains were used to make whiskey.

The first brewery in Ontario was established in 1822 by James Farr. By the mid-nineteenth century, three large ports all had several breweries as there was easy access to cheap transportation, raw materials and markets. The attitude of the early populace towards spirits is well illustrated by Mr. Guillet, who states, "In early days distilleries and breweries were almost as common as grist and saw mills". He continues to say that in the time period around 1830, "distilleries were among the first establishments in most

settlements....whiskey was early considered an antidote to hardships of pioneer life."

Taverns were described as being extremely rowdy and tough. In 1832 an English traveller who visited the Steamboat Hotel, later known as the Albion, in Cobourg gave the following description of mealtimes. "8 a.m. breakfast was a general rush from all parts of the house and the neighbouring stores... Instantly the work of destruction commenced--plates rattled, cups and saucers flew about, and knives and forks found their way indifferently into their owner's mouths or the various dishes on the table. There was little talking and less ceremony."

"The evening meal was composed of tea, coffee, toast and bread and the never failing buckwheat cakes, with a variety of sweet meats, crowned with a piece de resistance in the shape of a huge greasy dish of beef steaks and onions...The company was of a motley description, Yankees and emigrants--washed and unwashed--store keepers, travellers and farmers. Ten minutes sufficed for the dispatch of the meal; after which each and all retired in silence and haste as they had entered, stopping however as they passed the bar, for the never-failing dram and cigar, which concludes the business."

The Half-way House was located on Lot 4, Concession 7 in Hamilton Township. It was build around 1812 when the old Danforth Road was the major highway between York (Toronto) and Kingston. The house stood "halfway" between the two major towns, thus it was a very important inn. Originally, there was a low third-story verandah at the rear which was a ballroom capable of accommodating 150. Edwin Guillet wrote in 1958 that at the slope of the hill at the rear there are "the remains of a cider mill that provided refreshment."

Barnum House was built by Eliakim Barnum, who came from Rutland, Vermont in 1812. The home which he called "The Poplars" was built in 1821 and is one of the finest examples of colonial architecture in Canada. Barnum became a well-to-do man due to his flour mill and distillery. He was the owner of over 300 acres.

The first settlers in the Cobourg area arrived about 1797. Originally there were three separate settlements in the Cobourg area. The first area was found down by the



lakeshore where the present town exists. The first store, portrayed as being a "big log hut", was built on King Street around 1802. This region was generally very wet and marshy at that time. The second area was known as Hull's Corners. The Farmers Insurance Building can be found in the area of old Hull's Corners. The third settlement was called Amherst, a village which stood where the Golden Plough now stands. The Amherst district represented the tract of land owned by the Burnham family. At first, it was the most prosperous area, and the construction of the court-house in this area served as an additional promotion. The white house across from Zellers is a Burnham House. It was called Whitehall, and was built by Zaccheus Burnham in 1816.

In 1807, Zaccheus Burnham built a large distillery in Amherst, near the Court House. There was also, in the vicinity, a tavern where the jury retired. They must have arrived at some interesting decisions! Following Burnham, James Gray Bethune constructed a distillery in Amherst. A gentleman named Bently also opened a distillery in the proximity of the Court House. In the actual Cobourg area, the first distillery was owned and operated by Benjamin Throop and was built in the year 1827 on First Street. John Hopper managed this distillery, which was said to produce "very superior whiskey". Throop enlarged his distillery in 1831. He also had a distillery on the southwest corner of King and Division, presently the Toronto Dominion Bank site.

John Hopper's brother had a brewery next to Throop's First Street distillery. In 1836, P.T. Dobson had a brewery on Division Street. It was later purchased by Thomas Eyre, a "brewer, maltster and retailer in hops."

In 1827, Cobourg, as recounted by a surveyor named John Smith, was of a "healthy and pleasant" situation.

"It stands immediately on the shore of Lake Ontario... In 1812, it had only one house; it now contains upwards of 40 houses, an Episcopal Church, a Methodist Chapel, 2 good inns, 4 stores, several distilleries, an extensive grist mill, and the population may be estimated at about 350 souls".

At that time, practically every village had a distillery. Whiskey was priced at 2 pence a quart. Wm. H. Smith in his Canadian Gazetteer in 1846 notes that Cobourg has one brewery, 3 distilleries and 12 taverns.

It appears that distilleries preceded breweries in Cobourg. James Calcutt, the earliest of the major brewers, came to Cobourg from Dublin, Ireland in 1830 with his family. A master brewer and distiller, he opened the Cobourg Brewery and Distillery in December of 1832. At a time when there was very little industry, Calcutt's operation was a very important business for many years.

Calcutt's property originally was five acres south of Orr Street. He built a malt house, a kiln, a mill supposedly powered by a 16 h.p. engine, and a business office. The establishment manufactured copper, distilled malt and whiskey, beer for bottling and draft ale. Calcutt also built the Hibernia Mills, just east of his brewery and distillery. None of these buildings appear to remain today.

Based on early descriptions, Calcutt's house was obviously very sumptuous. The residence faces Durham Street and is now the Calhoun Apartments. The ground floor boasted of a wide entrance hall, two large drawing rooms, a dining room of ample proportions, a butler's pantry, a china closet, a laundry area and a billiard room. The third floor served as quarters for the servants. In the basement, there was a scullery, dairy, bakehouse, a wine and beer cellar, a root-house, larder, boot and knife racks and lumber room.

Behind the house, there was a stone table eighty feet long. Some authorities suggest this was used as the malt house in the 1830's. East of the house near the lake was the grist mill and storehouse. West of the home was Calcutt's brewery and distillery. This was therefore quite an eminent operation considering the time.

However, Calcutt proved too extravagant for he over-expanded too quickly. The 1830's and 1840's were decades of vast expansion in Cobourg and typically, they were followed



by a slump of economic decline. About this time, the influence of the Temperance movement was increasing. A trend towards more moderate beverage consumption surfaced and the sales of alcohol were hampered by this growing force. In 1857, the entire Calcutt property, including the house, warehouse, brewery and distillery was put up for sale.

Carrying on the tradition, Kingsley Calcutt, son of James Calcutt continued to operate a brewery on Seminary Street, now called University Avenue. James Calcutt Jr. moved to Port Hope and operated a brewery there until around the turn of the century.

In 1862, Henry MacKechnie bought the former Calcutt business. Henry MacKechnie was a Scot who, along with his two brothers, A. E. and Stuart MacKechnie, came to Cobourg in 1843 at the urging of D'Arcy Boulton. They were very wealthy.

Under Henry MacKechnie, the brewery and distillery proved to be very successful. Mr. Duncanson, a Scottish brewer and distiller, from Dick's Brewery in Edinburgh was hired as a superintendent. The operation produced 1000 gallons of ale per day and in 1864, there were 4000 gallons ready for sale. A stock cellar containing 6000 gallons existed. By 1865, 2000 barrels of beer per year were produced.

The Henry MacKechnie operation was taken over by MacPherson and Gordon. This company also did extremely well until the entire corporation was gutted by fire on January 4, 1899. It was thought that the fire was the work of incendiaries.

Captain Patrick Wallace came to Cobourg from Scotland in 1844, along with the MacKechnies. At age 24, he was a very enterprising and adventurous person. He was Captain of the "Orient", a ship which he sailed around the Horn as part of the famous East Indian Trade. In 1844, Captain Wallace and A. E. MacKechnie built a woollen mill and distillery in the present area on King Street west, just east of Tremaine Street. The distillery was called "The Ontario Distillery" and cost \$80,000 to build. Thirty-five men were employed by this plant, which consumed 150,000 bushels of grain annually. By 1850, there were 20,000 gallons of superior old whiskey for sale. The Ontario Distillery was exceedingly successful at first, but in 1860 the distillery had to be shut down for

financial reasons. On November 9, 1861, disaster in the form of a terrible fire struck again. In the Cobourg Sentinel, the following report of the fire was given:

"A most disastrous fire took place in this town about half past 10 o'clock on Thursday night last. The victim of the devouring element was a large new frame building which had been nearly completed for Messrs. Wallace and Co. at their extensive works known as the "Ontario Distillery". The building had been fitted up and got scarcely in operation for the manufacturing of brandy, gin, vinegar etc. It appears that the night watch, in going through the building to see that all was right, allowed a light, which he carried, to come in contact with the high wire, which was then running from the still, when it immediately ignited, and, in a few moments, the whole building was on fire.. Nothing could stay the progress of the flames which burst furiously through the doors and windows, and soon enveloped the building in one immense blaze. Some time elapsed ere the alarm was given or the fire bells were rung, during which time the few who had gathered, worked with a will to save as much as possible of the property".

The article went on to say that the granary and nearby buildings were saved by the citizens present who sufficiently dampened sidewalls and roofs so as to prevent the flames from spreading until the firemen arrived. The distillery was completely destroyed. Among articles lost in the fire were carpenter's tools, machinery, liquors and spirits. The loss was estimated to be greater than \$20,000.00 and was only partially covered by insurance. It was also mentioned that Captain Patrick Wallace "with a degree of courage peculiar to himself, has already made arrangements for having the building re-erected immediately".

Wallace also became one of the original directors of the Bank of Toronto and a director of the Provincial Insurance Company. In 1862, Captain Wallace suffered a stroke which left him partially paralyzed. On the advice of his doctor, he returned to Scotland where he experienced another stroke but lived until 1874. He was 82 when he died.



John Sinclair Wallace, son of Capt. Patrick Wallace, opened a large distillery in 1856 on William Street at the site of the present General Wire and Cable. He, too, named his distillery the "Ontario Distillery". It was a very large operation and is the only original Cobourg distillery still standing. However, the distillery was not prosperous "due to incompetent management" and it was closed. In 1863, the Bank of Montreal re-opened the distillery. For a while it prospered with a staff of 35 employees, but then another problem arose. Five hundred cattle and 1500 hogs were being fed there from the refuse from the grain used in the distillery. A horrible stench was created from all this which provoked the hiring of a lawyer on behalf of the local citizens. The swine yard was closed as a result, and the Bank closed the distillery.

Brewing and distilling was a most profitable local industry in Ontario from about 1825-1902. With the growth of large companies, the local enterprises either went bankrupt, sold out or merged with large corporations. New industrialization and the steam engine were commodities small companies could not afford. The emergence of temperance societies and prohibition lessened the widespread acceptance of drink. These factors led to the downfall of local brewing and distilling.

Temperance societies were groups who had extensive social influence in Victoria times. The first Canadian temperance group was formed in 1828. The movement gained momentum in the 1870's and 1880's, when women were permitted to join. At first there were two types of temperance societies: one which felt that beer and wine could be drunk while spirits or liquors were unacceptable, and a second group which believed only total abstinence was permissible. Naturally, the total abstinence faction overcame the other and to the detriment of distillers, it became fashionable to serve ice water and lemonade at "society" dinner parties. Coffee, rather than liquor, was served with dessert.

In order to command fashionable and wealthy patrons, inn keepers started up temperance hotels. Cobourg's Temperance

Hotel was called the "St. Lawrence Temperance Hotel". It was opened August 31, 1859 and was located at the corner of Division and James Street in the McConnell Block. The hotel no longer exists but may have been what is now Campbell Terrace. Unfortunately, temperance hotels made little money without bars.

The "Temperance Period" had a profound effect on the quality of life in the community. Apart from the moral issues, probably emanating from the churches, one can only imagine the change in life style and the commercial implications this period invoked. The clash of these powerful ideologies must have been devastating!



Ontario Distillery on William Street  
Now General Wire & Cable



## History Of Victoria College--Cobourg

by Dr. Goldwin S. French

The ebb and flow of social and economic pressures have etched a haphazard pattern of educational development. Emphasis has switched from centralization to decentralization, from arts and humanities to the sciences and in Canada, Cobourg's significant role cannot go unnoticed.

In the early 1830's Cobourg was witness to the construction and opening of Upper Canada Academy, the residential preparatory school destined to become Victoria College and University. Cobourg was chosen as a suitable location for the academy partly because of the "freedom of the pupils from exposure to the temptations of a larger centre of population." Upper Canada Academy was officially opened in 1836 by a small group of Methodists. The Charter granted by King William IV to the Methodists in 1836 was the first of its kind granted in the British Empire, for it was unusual for the Crown to grant privileges of this nature to non-Anglican institutions. In the Charter it was stated that the Crown had had trouble in defining a Methodist or Methodist Conference. Strictly speaking, they did not exist as a religious institution.

Five years after the opening of the academy, on the 27th of August, 1841, the Charter was amended by an Act of Parliament of the Province of Canada enabling the Academy to possess degree-granting powers; a right first exercised in 1845 when Oliver Springer, having passed exams in classics, calculus and astronomy, was granted the bachelor degree. In honour of the new Queen, the academy was renamed Victoria College.

Victoria College became Victoria University in 1884 with the addition of the faculties of Medicine, Law and Theology. The addition was made because Albert College had recently joined with Victoria. University status was required to satisfy all factions.

The faculty of medicine, established in 1854, was merged with the Toronto medical faculty in the year 1892 when Victoria federated with the University of Toronto. The faculty of Law,

instituted in 1862, was abolished as well in 1892. The faculty of theology, established in 1873, was united with the former faculty at Knox College to form Emmanuel College. Since 1928, Victoria College has taught arts and science and Emmanuel College has taught theology inside the University of Toronto. Collectively, they make up Victoria University.

During the pre-1892 period of full independence, Victoria graduated several thousand students in Law, Theology, Medicine and the Arts. Since 1892 some 21,000 students have graduated in Arts and Science, and several thousand in theology. At present, Victoria College has approximately 18,000 living alumni and Emmanuel has roughly 1600.

Basically, this is the history of Victoria College.

In 1841 when Victoria College was born, the conditions facing Upper Canada were very different from our own time. Educational conditions were no exception. Upper Canada's primary schools were primitive and inadequate. Secondary education was provided largely by Upper Canada College, the district grammar schools and Upper Canada Academy. All were very small institutions. At that time the classical curriculum was not challenged and universities were clearly intended to be small institutions designed to provide members of the professions.

It was generally felt that conditions of education in the college should be both religious and British in nature. The Methodist community had become sensitive to the need of a general education for their children and for the ministry and to the need for some forms of higher education in the province. These factors, plus the lesser factors of denominational rivalry, the construction of Upper Canada College in Toronto and the failure of King's College to provide what some felt to be acceptable learning, led to the construction of Upper Canada Academy and later Victoria College.

Many Methodists who wanted to educate their children had to send them to school in the United States. This was unsatisfactory because of the cost and because it exposed the students to American culture. It was believed that an educational system



provided at home in a conformity with local conditions and needs and without discrimination against any religious group would be preferable. The conference approved the establishment of a literary institution in which, it was said by the conference, "The system of divinity or theology should be taught, but all students will be free to embrace and pursue any religious creed and attend any place of religious worship where parents or guardians may direct."

For the conditions at the time, this was a very liberal development. Their aim was, however, far from providing an education in a secular environment. In fact, the Methodists were to ensure that the precepts and principals of morality were carefully enforced.

The Reverend Anson Green gave an interesting description of the opening of Upper Canada Academy in 1836. He mentioned that it had first been resolved to establish the institution in 1830. On the 7th of June, 1832, Dr. Gilchrist of Colborne had laid the cornerstone.

The preparatory exercise, as described by Mr. Green, began with a church sermon from Proverbs 19:2, preached by the Reverend Joseph Stenson. There was a procession consisting of the architect Edward Crane, building committee, Mr. Stenson, Mr. Green, a large number of ministers, the principal and masters Case and Whitehead, students and spectators. The procession entered the grounds, then the building and proceeded to the chapel where there were more prayers. Further ceremonies included speeches and the giving of the office key to the principal.

From the start the school was plagued by financial problems. Rooms were without furniture. Students were pressing for accommodation. Workmen were anxiously awaiting their pay. Into the treasury went a debt of over \$16,000.00. This situation was not alleviated until federation with the University of Toronto in 1892.

The academy's first principal was the Reverend Matthew Richey, a northern Irish Presbyterian who had become a Methodist, and later a Methodist minister. Mr. Richey had an excellent

classical education in Ireland. His sermons were composed in a classical Victorian style using beautiful prose. His oratory skill was exceptional. He was an uncharacteristic preacher who gave unusual sermons.

Mr. Richey was also very conservative. This is illustrated by the fact that he believed students should be taught that loyalty to Britain was of fundamental importance. He as well felt that "Methodism should be purified from the pollution of politics."

Mr. Richey was principal until 1840 when he went back to being a minister until 1850. At that point he returned to Nova Scotia.

It was felt that the efficiency and usefulness of the school would be greatly increased if it were given college status. The Methodists felt that the college should have, at the college level as well as the secondary level, a practical education allowing students from wide backgrounds to acquire useful knowledge rather than the traditional curriculum.

In 1841, the Methodist church in Upper Canada considered itself to be a Canadian denomination. Victoria became an institution for the ordinary people and a predominantly Canadian institution with Canadian faculty and Canadian presidents. The Methodists were proud of their support and achievement in the educational system, but they tended to be cautious of the effects of higher education in some areas and therefore were unsympathetic to some new ideas. They encouraged students to accept a religiously orientated society and attempted to create students who would play an informed, positive role in public affairs.

Between 1841 and 1912, Victoria had four principals and chancellors or presidents: Egerton Ryerson, 1842-44; Alexander McNab, 1847-49; Samuel Nelles, 1850-1887; and Nathaniel Burwash, 1887-1913. Ryerson, Nelles and Burwash had clear objectives and exerted direct influence on the life and work of the college.

Egerton Ryerson was installed as principal on June 21, 1842. He was well educated. It was his belief that education was to develop man's physical, mental and moral faculties. He wanted the institution to embrace a classical and scientific education. His educational model had two parts: a preparatory level in the academy for those who weren't going to college, and a collegiate level for those going into the professions such as politics, law, the ministry or business. In the preparatory system English and history should take precedence over classical studies, for what better way to maintain the connection between Britain and Canada than to intermingle the two cultures? The collegiate course was to offer classics, mathematics, science, moral science, rhetoric, literature and theology.

Ryerson felt that a greater emphasis should be put on science. Religious and Canadian themes, he believed, should be stressed; however, classical studies were not that essential. For Ryerson, the object of the college was to lay a common educational foundation that was balanced, practical and religious.

Ryerson was certain that his ideas were timeproof and indisputable, yet soon the principles built into the foundation which he laid began to be questioned. In the 1850's there occurred major changes in scientific thought; history became a significant academic study and biblical criticisms began to reshape theological teaching. As a result, problems arose which his successors would have to deal with in molding the curriculum and atmosphere of Victoria.

Samuel Nelles was a student at Victoria in Ryerson's time. He completed his studies in Connecticut and was appointed as a professor at Victoria in 1850. By 1852, he had become principal. He came to Victoria as a strong Methodist and a great believer in science.



Intellectual problems plus a "confidence crisis" faced Nelles when he came into the position. The Methodists had gone into the enterprise of Victoria without much thought as to the cost. By 1850 many concluded that Victoria should be either incorporated with the University of Toronto or be closed. In 1854, only two students graduated, a figure which was not inspiring. Suggestions were made in 1850 that Victoria and Queen's could join with the University of Toronto as theological colleges. The Methodists, after a great deal of thought, decided to go on. They managed to receive government support until 1868 which cheered them up.

Nelles, although very quiet and unassuming, was determined and continued to fight for the existence of Victoria. He built up confidence, curriculum and the student body over the course of his term, and left it in a condition that could be built on. This was perhaps his greatest contribution.

Nelles demonstrated many times his wisdom, tolerance and perceptiveness. He emphasized in a speech to the students in 1853, "Christianity itself brings happiness to men only in so far as it rectifies their disordered natures and brings peace to the conscience, courage to heart and light to the understanding. But the gospel cannot be fully understood without intellectual preparation... We are not called on to choose between study and prayer. Study without prayer is arrogance. Prayer without study is fanaticism. Neither ignorance nor fanaticism will

find true wisdom."

For his time, Nelles was an undogmatic type of Christian. His attitude toward science is shown in his belief that it shines "floods of light and sometimes very perplexing crosslights on the works and ways of God, and they (sciences) become necessary studies." He realized every university should teach science, comparative religion, English literature and should recognize the need for increased specialization. Thus in the 1860's specialized degrees, or honours degrees and electives were beginning to be recognized.

Nelles was most responsible for the building of Faraday Hall beside the Old Building in Cobourg. It was the first science building in the province. Faraday Hall was later destroyed.

Meanwhile, Nelles was battling to keep Victoria financially afloat. By the 1880's Nelles realized there was no future in trying to maintain the kind of institution Victoria had become. He began to move towards a federation with the University of Toronto and by the time of his death the federation movement was almost at its climax. The legislation for the move was passed that year, 1887.

Nelles was succeeded in 1887 by Nathaniel Burwash. Burwash graduated from Victoria in 1859. In 1866 he joined the faculty as the first science professor, then in 1873 as professor of theology. He was preoccupied with federation, with the Christian outlook as a result of critical biblical studies and science, and with the religious inadequacy of his college life. He taught a Sunday School Bible class for students.

Burwash was exceptionally earnest, but lacked the sense of humour Nelles possessed. He was also, in his own way an undogmatic and tolerant man who was trying hard to develop a positive attitude toward advances of knowledge. He said in one speech, "we must accept the sciences of this day, both to discern and convey religious truths...Honest doubt is not prejudgement, which is prejudice, it is that suspense of judgement that seeks reasonable grounds for the acceptance of truth... all truth resided in the perfect unity and harmony of God and could be no final conflict between scientific and religious ideas, and therefore no need to impose limit on scientific enquiry."

By 1913 Burwash, having been in office for so long, was beginning to feel out of touch. His resignation may have been precipitated by the fact that the young women in the residences were beginning to assert the possibility of some measure of self-government and this he found very difficult to accept.

Burwash was the final architect of the federation between Victoria and the University of Toronto. Nelles, in his last months, had opposed federation because it sacrificed too much of Victoria's position to the University of Toronto, he believed. Burwash was left to complete the task. It was not easy for him, as there was some litigation to prevent the move. In the end that was overcome and Victoria became the first partner in the federation with the University of Toronto in 1892. The New Building, now the main building of Victoria, had been constructed at the north end of Queen's Park behind the parliament buildings, built in the same style.

It may well have been that if Victoria had stayed in Cobourg or if it had moved to Hamilton, as was once suggested, it could have survived as an independent university as Queen's has in the 20th century. However, that did not happen. One might only speculate what might have happened had time and fate been more generous to allow Victoria College to flourish here.



Today, Victoria exists within the University of Toronto. The influential role which Victoria has played in molding higher education in Canada is unquestionable, and Victoria has been shown to produce types of people who, in one way or another, are capable of upholding the values instilled in them by the college and meeting the challenge of life.

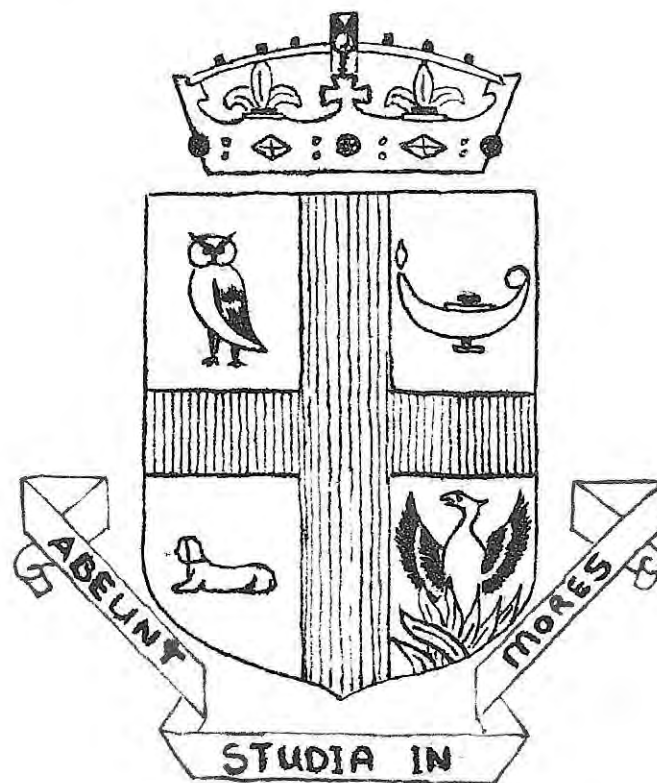


Victoria College Building

The Illumination of Victoria College

read by Marion Hagen

The Cobourg Advertising World of March 8, 1872 described the illumination of Victoria College, an event carried out in tribute to Rev. Professor and Mrs. Reynar. The article read, "On Thursday night of last week, the windows on the south and west sides of Victoria College were brilliantly illuminated, over four hundred jets being kept burning for an hour and a half. On enquiring the reason, the good citizens were informed that it was a token of congratulation and respect on the part of the students, to Rev. Professor and Mrs. Reynar on the birth of their little daughter. Such marks of esteem and affection are highly creditable both to the parties tendering them and to the worthy recipients. We trust that the future of the little stranger may be as bright as was this practical manifestation of delight at her arrival."



Coat of Arms of Victoria College

## Pre-1930 Cobourg Schools

by Cynthia Lelliott

Many today can recall times spent in the tiny one-room schools of our past. These dim and early facilities played an important role in establishing standards and values for their students, thereby making a significant contribution to society at that time. Early schools also laid, in a sense, the foundations for our modern educational system.

As the town of Cobourg began to emerge, it became increasingly necessary to provide educational facilities to meet the needs of a growing populace.

At first there was little attention paid to education; however, the future looked brighter, for Governor Simcoe had planned to equip the small settlements of Upper Canada with sufficient schools. A plan was laid out by Governor Simcoe providing each district with a Grammar School. The Grammar Schools were to be united under the common surveillance of a University to be situated at the seat of Government in Governor Simcoe's province. Governor Simcoe was recalled before the implementation of this Act, although a second Act was created in 1807 by the government, designating 100 pounds for each of the teachers employed to administer the eight District Schools which had already been proposed. In the second Act it was suggested that the school for the District of Newcastle be positioned in the Township of Hamilton.

The school for the District of Newcastle was secured by Cobourg. It was described as "a large rectangular white brick building with a high close board fence," by M. A. Sorsoleil of the Cobourg Sentinel Star, July 22, 1937. The school was established on the southeast corner of University Avenue and John Street. Mr. Sorsoleil also relates, "The school had been abandoned when I first played on its campus which extended along University Avenue to Mr. Payne's pasture field, which occupied the corner lot at University Avenue



and College Streets. Rev. Dr. Roy, afterwards Rector of St. Peter's Church was one of its principals. Once abandoned, the building became dilapidated. The boards were pulled off the windows and the doors forced. It was said to be the abode of "Jimmy Ruggs" (a mutation of rags, I fancy) who sat long and often on the stoop in front of Sandy Schoon's shop at the corner of John and James Streets, engaging in long conversation with the children. The building was burned to the ground eventually and the playfield furnished space for the baseball diamond of the college corner gang."

Schools gradually sprang up in Cobourg. Before 1870 there existed only one common school. Almost 40% of children in Cobourg attended private schools. A parochial school taught by an Irishman named Mr. Ovens was established by the Anglican authorities and was opened prior to 1830. Other private schools were founded after 1820 by Wm. McCauley of the Parish of St. Peters, and by E. C. Hull.

The Division St. School was built in the pre-1830 period. It was a one-classroom structure composed of frame boards. The teacher, Merrick Sawyer, taught grades 1 through 8 at this early Cobourg school, which was located south of Trinity United Church on Division Street. The schoolhouse is no longer standing.

Another school belonging to the pre-1840 period was the Engine House School, situated on Ontario Street across from a blacksmith's shop operated by a Mr. Brown. The frame building became the #3 Engine House, and was probably the first and only school at that time to possess a bell.

Redmond's school was originally found south of the General Wire and Cable plant on William Street. In 1841 a Mr. Redmond opened a school on Spring Street, then one on Ball Street. The building on Ball Street is described as having centered in the Ball Street neighbourhood, the school being a small building just north of the Baptist Church. The school was closed in November of 1871.

The Cobourg Sentinel-Star of Thursday, July 22, 1937 included the following reference to an early Cobourg School:

"Mr. Frank Meehan assures me that there was a Protestant school somewhere near the corner of "Tannery Lane", now Covert Street and George Street. I do not recall any such school, but my informant tells me that many a time and oft did he engage in fierce combat as returning home from Separate School, he passed this hot bed of Protestantism and was forced to defend his religious faith."

All of these schools which have been mentioned thus far are no longer in existence. No walls remain to echo the blatant laughter of children's voices. Like the hurried and gleeful roar of feet leaving the classroom at the end of the school day, these schools have removed themselves from our world and have left behind a mere few records and the shadows of memory.

The No. 1 Court House School serviced students from the northwest area of Cobourg. It was built in 1841 at a site south of the Golden Plough Lodge, Cobourg. The teacher in 1842 was a Mr. Hamilton, who taught grades 1 through 8 at this one-room school. In 1889 the Court House School was closed for renovations and repairs as it had begun to collapse. Classes were meanwhile held in the West End Sunday School. The Court House School was reopened in February of 1896 and was henceforth known as "The Victorian School." In December of 1903 the school was renamed "The Court House School". The exact date of closure for this school is unknown; however, a reference was made in 1948 to indicate that the building had been torn down shortly before that date.

The Ontario Seminary was a private girls' school in Cobourg. The school was under the supervision of Miss Wright and Miss Shoemaker, and it employed four teachers. In 1840, a three year course was offered with the following courses included: English grammar and composition, American and modern geography, Arithmetic, Algebra, Geometry, Logic, Philosophy, Chemistry, Astronomy, Use of the Globe, Botany, Rhetoric, Mental Philosophy, Moral Science, Paley's evidence, Latin, German, Italian. Certainly several of these subjects would be considered curious by the students of today!

Some interesting developments pertaining to Cobourg education occurred in the 1850's. In 1850 a Bill was issued that gave ratepayers the right to decide if education should be free; however, free education was not established in Cobourg at that time. Attendance in the Common Schools was extremely poor. In 1851, 359 students enrolled in the Common schools but only 234 attended regularly. In 1852, 437 students had enrolled, only to exhibit an attendance rate of 284. In the 1850's attempts were made to establish suitable library facilities for the Common Schools. Money was obtained to help fund a library in the respective Common Schools in Cobourg in September of 1853, and in December of that year a suitable room for the Common School Library was sought through public advertisement and a librarian was sought. In 1863, there were 12 libraries in Cobourg, hosting 3380 books.

About 1830, a Scotsman named McLaren started a school on the west part of what today is the Sunoco gas station at the corner of Spring and King Street. He later moved the school to a house on Albert Street, and there was another reference made to a McLaren's school on the site of the present Legion Hall on Orr Street.

Probably still standing is the frame building that hosted Cunningham's school on King Street just west of Tugg's Furniture. Mr. William Pomeroy also operated a school near the James and Division Streets intersection on the south side of James Street. The premises were abandoned after June 30, 1872 and the building, shed and fences were sold to Mr. McGwan.

Pringle's school was conducted by A. Pringle and was located near the corner of King and Second Streets where the Family Tree House bookstore now stands. Church services were also held in this early Cobourg school. Messrs. Ratcliffe and Bothwell had a school in a building on the corner of Division and Swayne Streets.

Standing at the north end of Tremaine Street south of King Street and across from the Cobourg Star Newspaper office is a red painted building that closely resembles a school house. The structure is long and low, and it bears a single door on the east side. Above the door there



is a box that would appear to have at one time, contained a school bell. Curiously, there are no records to indicate that the building was used as a school.

In 1854, an attempt was made to introduce French to the ~~common~~ Schools of Cobourg. By 1862, Cobourg had furnished 10 private schools for its student population, which reached a height of 1065 in 1863. Slight hints were found to imply that certain children were given rights to free education around February of 1864. Among other interesting developments in education at this time were the institution of high school entrance examinations in 1871, and the suggestion made for the creation of a night school in January of 1870 although the night school was not established until 1881. Also, the number of women teachers began to surpass the number of men teachers in the period around 1877.

The Bagot Street School, or School No. 2 was located on the east side of Bagot south of Albert Street. It was built in 1871 to service pupils living west of Division and north and south of King Street. The school originally was a one room building but later it was enlarged to two rooms. Grades 1 through 8 were taught at this school that was designed by Samuel Retallick. It was closed in 1871 and has since been used as a residence and as apartments.

The original Schoolhouse No. 3 was built in 1860 and was located on the corner of Chapel and John Streets. Little is known about this school except that it was probably overcrowded.

The Model School was found on University Avenue west of Spring Street. It was later known as school house No. 3, and it was the main public school in Cobourg in the late 1800's. The 4-room structure was completed in 1875. The total cost of the building and its 2 acre grounds was approximately \$5,000.00. In addition to grades 1 to 8, the Model school offered a post-secondary Teachers-in-Training program. In 1901, a kindergarden class was also started. The school was divided into four departments: the primary, secondary, third and highest department. All the department rooms were described as being large, airy, light and exceedingly pleasant.

Hull's Corners School was built in 1832 at the fork in the road where Division Street and Highway 45 meet. It was a one-room school where grades 1-8 were taught before its closing around 1861.

Several pre-1930 Cobourg Schools are still in use as schools today. One such school is the Cobourg District Collegiate Institute West or the Second Cobourg Collegiate Institute. Built in 1902 on King Street, it contained six classrooms, a laboratory, a gymnasium, a library and an office and services furnished for grades 9-13. Edwin C. Guillet relates: "By a majority of one vote, the Town Council voted to issue debentures to the amount of \$12,000.00 for the construction and equipment of a new Collegiate Institute. Some of the Councillors then changed their minds and suggested that the approval of the ratepayers first be obtained. Some citizens favoured improvements of the old building on King Street East, others favoured a new structure in the west end of town, while there were the usual numbers who were opposed to any expenditure for improved educational facilities." The collegiate facilities were expanded with the addition of the terrace on King Street east of the school in 1928. This space was employed as a typing room, cooking room, sewing room, a special commercial room and a fifth form.

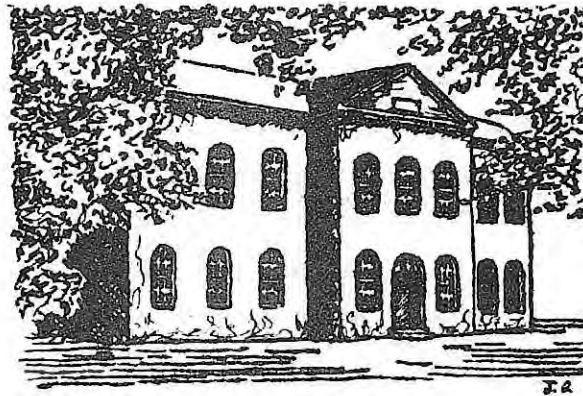
Other historic schools which are still used as schools today include St. Michael's Separate School and Thomas Gillbard Public School.

St. Michael's Separate School is found on University Avenue, west of Division Street. This school, originally 2 rooms, was constructed of pale yellow brick in 1903.

Thomas Gillbard Public School was publicly opened on September 2, 1907. This red brick structure is located west of the line of George Street and south of James Street. The cornerstone was laid on June 14, 1906 by Mr. Thomas Gillbard who unfortunately died 5 days before the school opened. In the cornerstone there was placed a tin box containing copies of the Cobourg World, Cobourg Sentinel Star, and the Post newspapers of June 8th and 9, 1906; the Toronto Globe, Mail and Empire, and World newspapers of June 14, 1906; and also a 25¢ piece, a 10¢ piece and a bronze 1¢ piece.



Early Cobourg schools were numerous and each one has a unique and fascinating history. Many of their stories have unfortunately been lost to us, hidden by the opaque screen of time. Today we can best look back on these academies realizing that they persisted against and survived, through many hardships, troubles and odds not faced by the schools of modern times. Cobourg's early schools should stand as a reminder of the struggle to improve opportunities for their pupils in a new, expanding land.



Model School, built 1874 now  
Nyberg Plumbing Co.



## Cobourg's Fishing Party

by Percy L. Climo

In 1831 the young village of Cobourg was steadily growing. The developed area of the town was primarily found between Division Street on the east, and Spring-Hibernia Streets on the west. New subdivisions east of Division and west of Hibernia had yet to be laid out. The Cobourg Harbour Company had been organized two years earlier and two piers were under construction; one at the foot of Division, the second to the west and south of the present gaol building. Between them was a sandy beach and the estuary of the little creek.

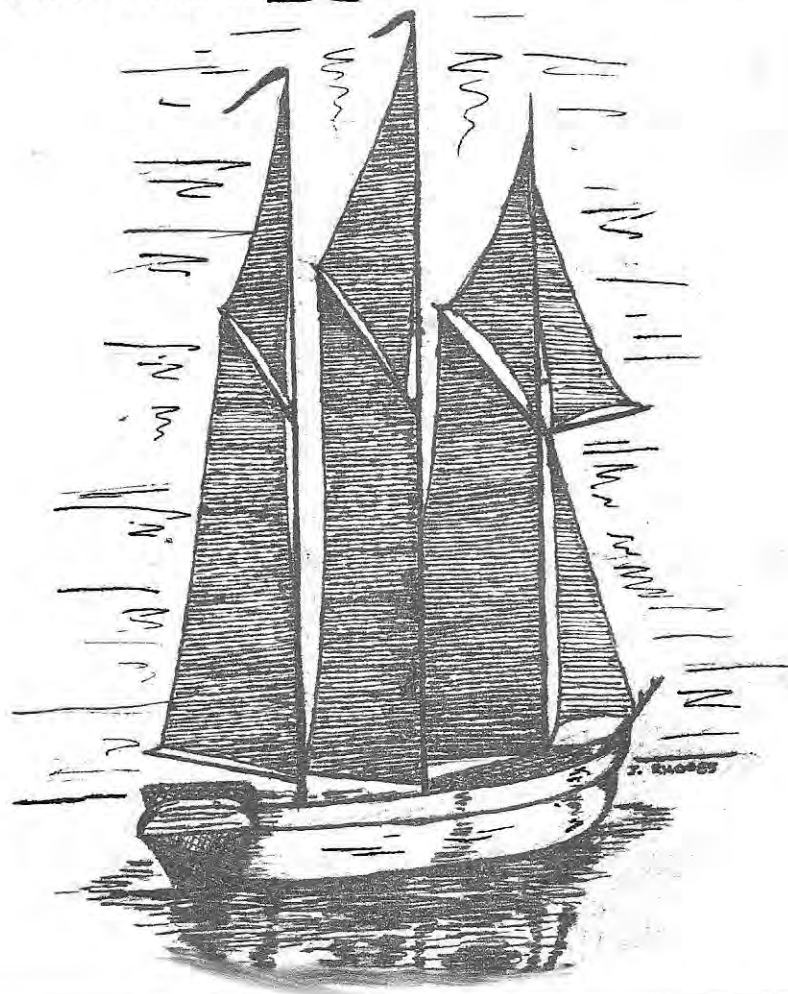
Evidence of an increasingly flourishing community was abundant. Merchants were arriving and setting up their various businesses. The Canada Company agents were active in Cobourg, directing settlers to lands in the country. The Cobourg Star produced its first issues in that year. The Methodists had just begun to construct Upper Canada Academy, later Victoria College. In the previous month the Northumberland Agricultural Society had held a large cattle show and plowing match in Cobourg. The Northumberland Militia held their day of camp and training north of the village earlier that month. New immigrants were streaming into Cobourg each week and the spirit of the day was buoyant and optimistic.

On Friday, June 24, 1831, a most interesting event occurred which was described by Mr. R. D. Chatterton, editor of the Cobourg Star. It was on the subject of fishing.

"Among the luxuries afforded us by living on the shores of the magnificent Ontario, we know none which offers itself in a more attractive shape than the abundant supply of excellent fish, furnished us by this inland sea. In many respects it forms a great addition to the advantages enjoyed by this thriving town. In the first place--a dish of well-flavoured fish is a sort of essential to a well furnished table as the palates of most of our readers will acknowledge. In the second place--the catching of these delicious animals is a source of infinite

amusement to our good town fold. And lastly, though by no means the least in our estimation, the scaly fry secure a welcome and abundant supply of food for the numerous immigrants who at present line our shores."

A subtle breeze diluted the intense rays of the Friday sun and sent ripples dancing across the transparent waters of Lake Ontario. It was a beautiful day for fishing. A large net was cast between the two piers. The net was brought in by a boat and as soon as it had reached ground eager hands hauled the catch to shore, while an excited crowd of spectators watched. "Presently the silvery sides of some unfortunate strugglers, glittering on the bright surface of the water, gave token of success and there burst forth at once the joyous cries of all" - Indeed they were successful for 1200 fish were caught weighing from half a pound to one and a half pounds. "Another haul was soon made with almost equal luck, and then a sufficient supply being obtained, the whole were distributed with impartial and praiseworthy liberality among all present, every man, woman and child being loaded with large portions of this wholesome and nutritious food."





## The Well At The Four Corners

by Col. C. Gordon King

A recommendation for the drilling of a well at the corner of King and Division Streets came in the Town Council News section of the Cobourg World on Friday, November 22, 1878. The report of the committee was discussed and later adopted.

Mr. Street Inspector Clark began drilling the well in hopes of obtaining a greater supply of water. On Tuesday, December 10, 1878, the drilling operation discovered a deposit of petroleum in a layer of shale some 60 feet below the ground and approximately 30 feet below the depth of the existing well. There had been previous indications of the deposit, and these theories had become fact as a strong jet of escaping gas was expelled to a height almost equal to that of the drill cylinder. The gas was set on fire and it burned for a couple of hours, emitting a flame 3 or 4 feet above the pipe. Mr. Clark, a man knowledgeable on the subject of wells, felt that there existed rock oil in the vicinity of his drilling. He expected to come across a large amount of this substance if another layer of shale was reached.

The Cobourg Sentinel of Saturday, December 14, 1878 describes a similar set of events for Wednesday, December 11th. "On Wednesday, about noon when 60 feet deep, the drill pierced a crevice from which gas and water blew up pretty freely. The gas was lighted at the top and burned brightly and a pipe was put on the top and quite an illumination got up in the evening."

Drilling was resumed Thursday in the morning. At about 2:30, water burst from the well, the stream attaining a height of 10 feet above the ground. The gas which accompanied the water was again set on fire; however, the current was so strong that it managed to extinguish the flames. The resulting roar could be heard from a substantial distance.

When the drilling recommenced on Friday, yet another crevice was encountered which served to increase the escape of gas. The depth of the well had now reached approximately 70 feet. A week later on December 20, 1878, the drilling continued. The well had

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## Fire At The Four Corners

by Muriel Winter

There was yet another incident of fire at the Corner of King and Division Streets. It happened about 40 years after the fire which occurred when the town employees were digging a well and escaping gas became ignited. This particular fire was a deliberate part of the festivities on a day of celebration.

The year 1918 holds a special place in our memories. It was the year of the devastating flu epidemic. Schools did not open at their usual time in September, but later in October. Then one morning, in November, we students were gathered as usual outside the entrance to Cobourg Collegiate Institute, which was at that time neither East nor West, waiting for the doors to be opened. Imagine our amazement and excitement when our principal, "Mahog" Arthur, opened the doors while wildly ringing a large handbell and telling us, "The war is over, no school today". It was November 11. The day burst with joyous laughing, shouting, hilarity, bonfires and all the jubilation which accompanies such glorious news.

In the afternoon there was a parade down King Street in which many organizations took part and, being a member of the CGIT, I joined in the fun. In those days Cobourg streets were not paved and, as it had been raining, the streets were very muddy, but that did not dampen our spirits!

At the head of the procession, a coffin containing an effigy of the Kaiser was being carried. At the Four Corners, a huge bonfire had been lit. One can surmise what happened next; the coffin was thrown into the flames!

We all went home tired, cold, and muddy, but happy that the war was over.



attained a depth of 100 feet. The drill passed through minute layers of limestone, freestone and sandstone without successful or significant discovery of water, although there were several streams of gas given off which propelled water to the surface.

The following reference was made to the well at the Four Corners in the Cobourg World of Friday, February 7, 1879; "The drill in the well at the corner of King and Division Streets, having reached so great a depth as to cause rather too much work for a horse, it has been decided to continue the work by steam. For the purpose an engine belonging to the Cobourg, Peterborough and Marmora Railway Company has been procured from Harwood, being kindly lent the town by Col. Chambliss. It is now being placed in position and will shortly be trying its virtue without having to walk around a ring."

And so the drilling proceeded by way of machine. Still no indication of the possibility for bettering the water supply was obtained. Finally on the 29th of April, 1879, a resolution of Council called for the discontinuation of the well, which had reached a depth of 536 ft. The limestone formation had been passed through and any water brought to the surface was exceedingly salty. And, as the Cobourg World of Friday, May 2, relates, "Operations will no doubt be resumed in the fall; but at present the engine is required for other purposes and the services of the inspector are needed upon the streets. The old shanty is being removed and soon there will be no other indication of the late patient drilling operations than an old pipe with a plug in it. Thus, one by one, do our earthly glories fade away."

## The Prince of Wales Opens Victoria Hall

by Judy Rhodes

The young prince who visited Cobourg in 1860 was born on November 9, 1841 to his royal parents, Queen Victoria and Prince Albert. The child was christened Albert Edward.

Edward's childhood has been described as happy and peaceful. His early life was cushioned by the luxuries and pomp of his position. He was also kept somewhat sheltered from boys his own age. At an early age Edward demonstrated that his interests tended towards people and socializing as opposed to intellectual matters, a source of discouragement to his parents. Edward briefly attended lectures at Edinburgh University, then was admitted to Oxford as an undergraduate in October of 1859. In 1860, he embarked on a tour of Canada and the United States. Cobourg was one of his stops.

Edward's father, Prince Albert, died December 14, 1861. Henceforth Edward was given no say in matters of the state, court or family, for Queen Victoria was convinced that Edward's "somewhat wild behaviour" darkened the last weeks of Prince Albert's life, and she never forgave him for this. Even when he was over 50 years of age she continued to criticize him on official matters.

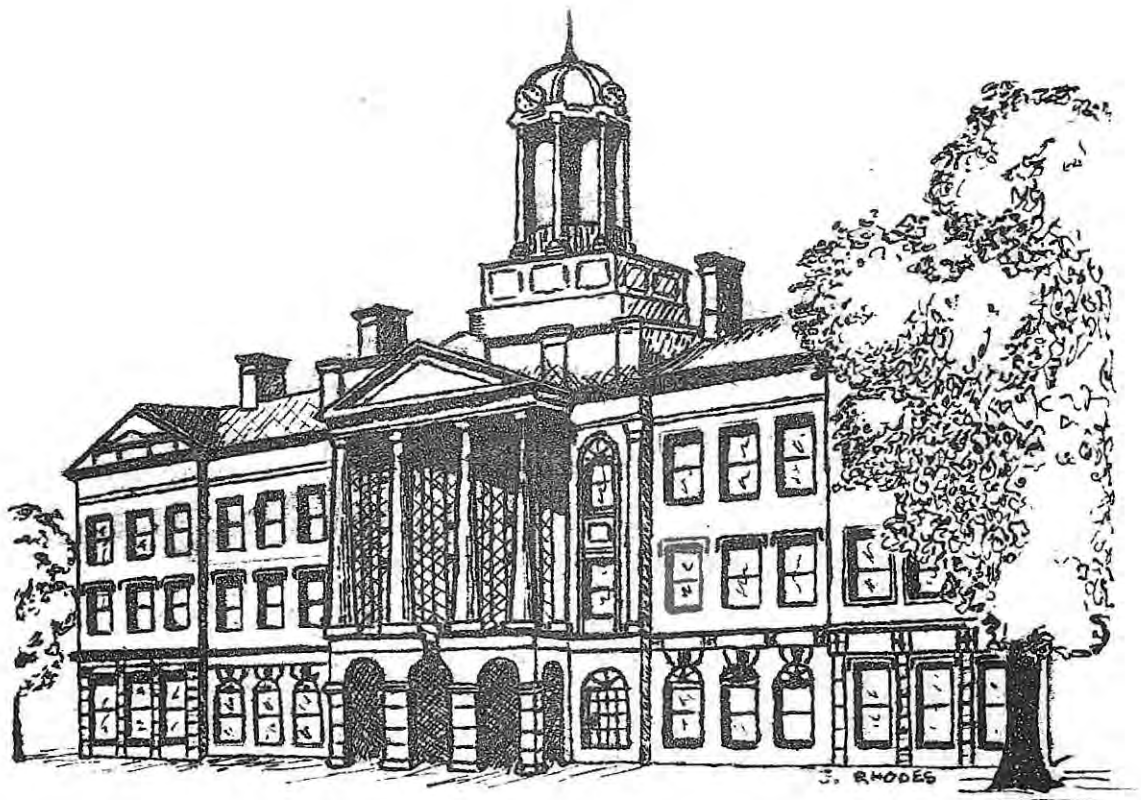
On March 10, 1863, Edward married Alexandra, the eldest daughter of the man who later became King Christian IX of Denmark. The marriage, having been arranged by the respective families, was a political one, yet although Edward and Alexandra had little in common, their marriage was successful. They had 5 children: Albert Victor, George, Louise, Victor and Maud.

Queen Victoria died on January 22, 1901. Shortly after her death, Edward succeeded to the throne, becoming King Edward VII. Although he had been isolated from the official business of the state, he was by no means unprepared for his new royal position. As a king he was enormously popular, especially with the socialites and the ordinary people. He was described as being "so strong and direct" by his admirer



Haldane. He demonstrated an intense concern with affairs at home and with the international situation. He enjoyed social functions, was Liberal in tendency, and seemed very debonair and fashionable. Indeed few people realized the poor state of his health. The general public was shocked at the news of his severe illness on May 5, 1910. King Edward VII died the following evening at age 69.

Edward, Prince of Wales, visited Cobourg in September of 1860 to inaugurate Victoria Hall. On September 6, he performed this function, the following passages being the addresses of the Mayor and Corporation of Cobourg, the Senate, Alumni and Students of Victoria College, and the replies of the Prince of Wales.



Victoria Hall

From: "Addresses presented to H.R.H. The Prince of  
Wales during his state visit to British North  
America, July, August and September, 1860."  
(Privately printed by the Duke of Newcastle, 1860.)

Read by: Mr. C. A. Hagen

MAYOR AND CORPORATION OF COBOURG, 6th September, 1860

May it please your Royal Highness,

We, the mayor and Corporation, on behalf of the Inhabitants of this loyal Town, tender to your Royal Highness a most hearty and British welcome, and desire to convey to your Royal Highness our high appreciation of the honour conferred upon us by the visit of your Royal Highness as the Representative of our most beloved Sovereign, and as Heir Apparent to that Throne to which we are most happy to declare our unqualified devotion and allegiance.

We have watched with daily increasing interest the progress of your Royal Highness since the first hour on which you landed upon the Possessions of your august Mother in British North America, and our love to your Illustrious House has been, if possible, increased by observing that the exhibition of those virtues which most highly adorn humanity have day by day added eclat and brilliancy to the Royal character of the Prince.

With no small degree of pride we advert to the fact, that our loyal town, forty years since, was named Cobourg, in honour of the first union contracted between the Paternal House of your Royal Highness and the Royal Family of Great Britain, and with jubilant hearts and profound pleasure we do now homage, personally, to the Prince of Cobourg.

Nearly thirty years since the College which adorns our Town was named "Victoria", in honour of the then Royal Princess, who has since won the unbounded love of Her subjects, and the admiration of the world, by the unrivalled virtues which adorn Her character as Sovereign and Mother.

And now we joyfully avail ourselves of the visit of Your Royal Highness to inaugurate our Victoria Hall, which will be doubly our pride--that we can associate with the name of our beloved Queen the presence of Her Royal Son, and Heir Apparent, in its dedication to public use; and when, by the wise decrees of that Power by whom "Kings rule, and Princes decree justice," your Royal Highness shall have ascended the Throne of Great Britain, our children, and our children's children shall revert to this 6th day of September, A.D. 1860, as an era of rare interest in the history of our Town.

We earnestly pray, that, in the progress of your Royal Highness through this Province, in your visit to the neighbouring Republic, in your return across the perilous deep, God may "give His angels charge concerning thee", and by His Providential care restore you in health and strength to our "Fatherland;" and when, in future years, you are called to assume the Sceptre of the Empire, it may be the highest aim of your Royal Highness to secure the happiness of your subjects by maintaining, in their purity, those glorious principles of Civil and Religious Liberty which are the impregnable bulwarks of the Throne of Great Britain.

REPLY OF THE PRINCE OF WALES:

Gentlemen,

It affords me no little pleasure to receive in this Town an Address so full of loyalty to The Queen and welcoming me so warmly to this part of the great Colony of Canada.

The name of the Town recalls to my mind happy recollections; but still more do your feelings of devotion to the British Crown appeal to my heart as the Son of those Parents whose merits you extol.

It will be most welcome to The Queen to learn that this Country is prosperous and happy. My visit to your shores proves that, though distant from the seat of Government, Canada is the object of your Sovereign's solicitude and constant care.

I thank you heartily for the good wishes with which you speed me on my way through this Province.

THE SENATE, ALUMNI, AND STUDENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF VICTORIA COLLEGE

May it please your Royal Highness,

We, the Senate, Alumni, and Students of the University of Victoria College, present your Royal Highness our loyal greetings and most cordial welcome.

The visit of your Royal Highness to this humble seat of learning will ever be remembered by us with gratitude and pride, and the annual recurrence of the day, celebrated with festivity and joy, will enable us to give renewed expression to those feelings of devoted attachment to the British Throne which it is our duty and happiness to cherish.

Our infant University cannot boast of architectural grandeur, or princely endowments; but we may refer with pleasure to the



fact, that although established and chiefly sustained by voluntary contributions, she was the first University in actual operation in this Colony, while she is, we believe, second to none in the number and character of her graduates.

Founded, as our Institution is, by Royal Charter, and honoured with the name of our Illustrious and Noble Queen, we desire that loyalty, patriotism, and religion, may unitedly animate the education imparted within her walls, and that the study of the unrivalled literature of our Fatherland, combined with the teachings of the great masters of Greece and Rome, may render Canadian youth not unworthy of their Saxon origin and language.

We implore upon your Royal Highness the Divine blessing. May you live to become the Sovereign of this great Empire, and may your reign be as happy and benign as that of your august and revered Mother.

REPLY OF THE PRINCE OF WALES:

Gentlemen,

Accept my thanks for an Address which, proceeding from the Senate and Students of a College which bears the name of The Queen, my Mother, and is devoted to the education of the youth of this Province, affords me peculiar pleasure.

I wish your University every success, and earnestly hope that in future years it may spread the blessings of a sound education to the rapidly-growing population in the midst of which it is erected.



KIVAS TULLY

Architect of Victoria  
Hall

## Amherst

by Percy L. Climo

Amherst was one of the earliest settlements in the Cobourg area. It stood roughly on the space encompassed by a circle of a one-quarter mile radius, with its center at the corner of Elgin and Burnham Streets. It was at this historic village that several important events occurred.

In the year 1791, a party of surveyors under the direction of Augustus Jones proceeded to block out eleven townships bordering on the north shore of Lake Ontario. They ran a measured traverse along the shore of the lake eastward from the Humber River near Toronto to the Trent River. After calculating the latitudes and departures of the traverse, Jones mapped out the side lines for the eleven townships and proceeded westerly to lay out and measure the base line for each township. The Hamilton Township line happened to pass near Elgin Street. The party returned from the east, cutting a line through the dense forest of maple and oak. That 1791 survey was the base for the area to the north of it and on which all land registrations are recorded.

Plans were conceived for a new district in this area in the time of Lieutenant Governor Simcoe, who was a very far-seeing and scheming individual. Northumberland County was as yet solid forest. Presqu'ile Point was selected as the site for the District Town. One year after Simcoe left Canada, in 1797, the Town of Newcastle in Northumberland County was laid out by a government surveyor. In the year 1802 the District of Newcastle was selected and the townsite of Newcastle was being promoted. Lots were sold to private individuals and the District Court House, a three-story frame building was erected there.

In 1804 an Indian murdered a white trapper at Lake Scugog. The Indian was apprehended and tried at York; however, the defence successfully argued that the trial should be held in the district of Newcastle, where the murder had been committed. The Court, including the Judge, legal people, the prisoner,



guards, witnesses, and others took passage on the government schooner "Speedy", and proceeded to Presqu'ile. Before their arrival, a severe storm came on. The "Speedy" was last seen just before dark on October 8, 1804 at about four miles off Presqu'ile Point. The boat and its 20 passengers were never seen again, and the Court was never held at Presqu'ile, in the Town of Newcastle.

Following this tragedy, the Justice of the Peace had second thoughts as to the desirability of the Town of Newcastle, located at Presqu'ile, as a location for the District Town and Court House. Preferring other accommodation, the Magistrates never held their Quarter Session meetings at the Presqu'ile Court House. It was decided to relocate and build a new Court House in a more central location, either in Haldimand or Hamilton Townships.

In 1805 Asa Burnham, one of the Magistrates, purchased Lot No. 19 in the first concession of Hamilton Township from Daniel McKyes. Asa Burnham offered to donate 4 acres of his land for the new Court House facilities. The offer was accepted, a building committee was appointed, and the erection of the structure proceeded. Lot No. 19 is on the north side of Elgin Street opposite the Fitness Centre.

Apparently, the Court House Building Committee made a change in location. Asa Burnham had also acquired Township Lot No. 20 from his cousin Aaron Greeley. This land is north of Elgin and east of Burnham Streets. It was here that the Court House was constructed, on the crest of the hill. The new building was first used by the Magistrates for their Quarter Session meeting on January 13, 1807. The property occupied by the Court House and Gaol, 2 acres in all, was transferred to the District of Newcastle on May 4, 1812. Thus, through the generosity and influence of Asa Burnham the Court House and Gaol, the centre of the Newcastle District, came to this location and gave Amherst the furtherance for advancement.

As of 1807 the other Courts of the district used the new facilities. In 1815 Hamilton Township opened Burnham



Street north from Danforth Road down to the Court House. At an early date, a Burnham kept a store near the Court House. Lewis Stiles acquired this corner property in 1817 and operated a hotel there for a number of years. Zaccheus Burnham owned the Township Lots on the west side of Burnham Street. In the early 1820's he began to sell building lots on the diagonally opposite corner. As more and more lots were sold along Burnham Street, the little village of Amherst came into being. Merchants set up stores and hotels were constructed.

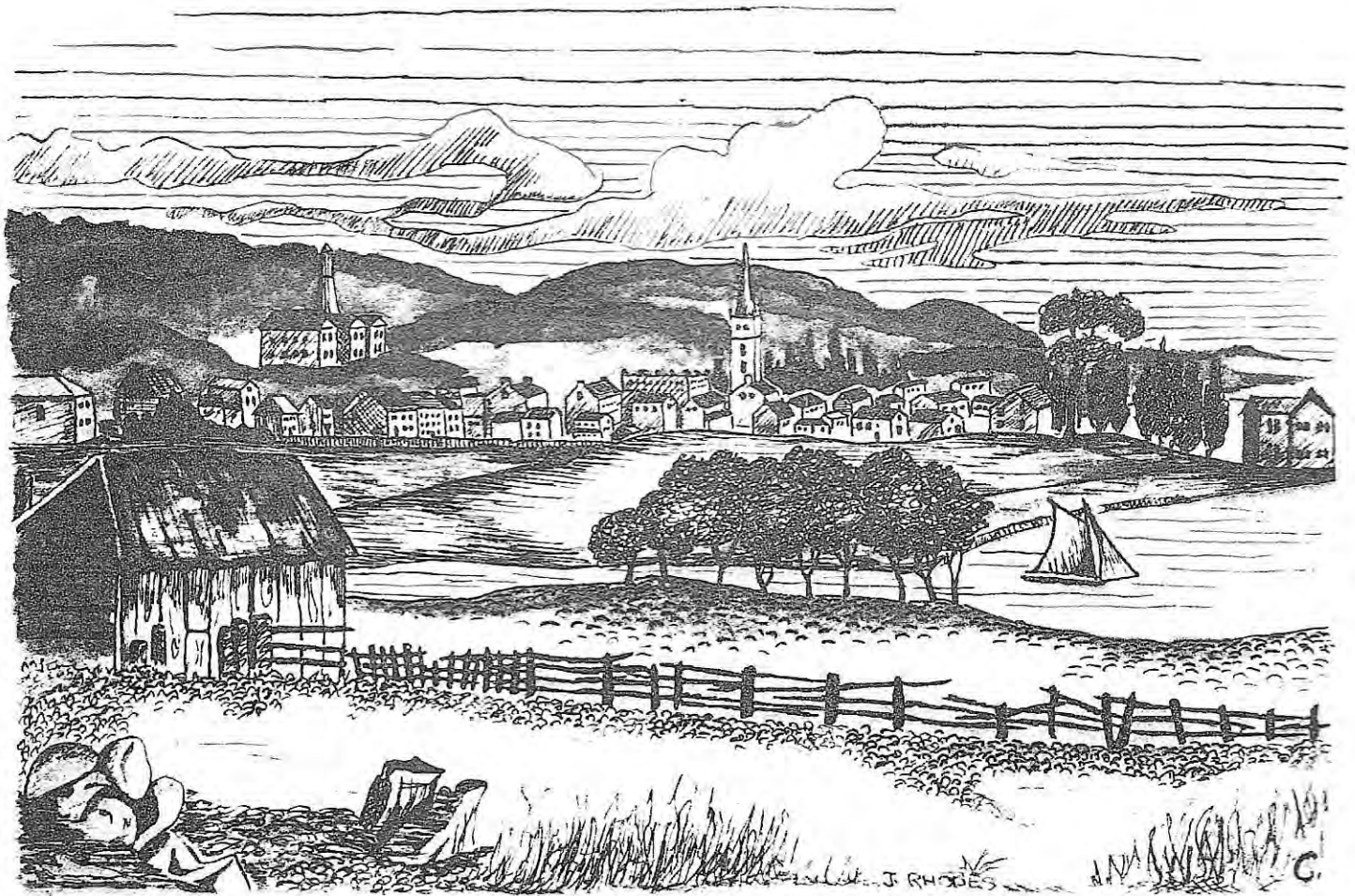
Around 1830, the wooden building serving as the District Court House and Gaol was deteriorating and became untenable. The District Magistrates decided to proceed with the erection of a new Court House before obtaining the necessary Act of Parliament for the legality of its construction. The new location was the west side of Burnham Street, where the present Golden Plough Lodge is situated. A violent controversy was stirred up, claiming the Magistrates had acted beyond their powers. Petitions followed for the new facilities to be built in Port Hope, in Cobourg, and also for it to remain in Amherst. The dispute was settled in 1831 by an Act of Parliament permitting its construction to proceed at Amherst. The new structure was officially opened on October 3, 1831. Mr. Alexander Fraser, a stone mason and storekeeper at Amherst was the contractor.

Amherst was a prosperous town. It boasted several houses, two or three hotels under various managements, and a dam built across the nearby creek north of Elgin, where a pail and tub manufacturing company under Mr. W. Hartwell had located in the 1830's. In later years, a school house was located near the corners. Amherst also experienced its fire losses; one in particular cleaned out a hotel and two houses in the 1840's.

On July 1, 1837, Amherst village lost its identity when it became part of the Town of Cobourg and subject to the new town by-laws. The name Amherst gradually disappeared and the region was thereafter referred to as "The Court House".

Of all the court cases and trials that took place here two stand out in importance and interest. In 1839, during

the rebellion and uprising against the "Family Compact" rule, a plot was discovered which prevented a murder, a robbery and a bank heist that had been planned for Cobourg. The parties concerned were brought to trial and sentenced in the local Court House. In 1859 Dr. King of Brighton was tried here and found guilty of poisoning his wife. The public hanging that followed was witnessed by a reputed ten thousand excited spectators, many of whom had travelled long distances to view the spectacle.



View of Factory Creek from Canada, Past, Present and Future

Printed in 1864

Royal Proclamation In Cobourg

by Percy L. Climo

The King, William the Fourth, died at Windsor Castle on the 20th day of June, 1837. The Proclamation announcing that the King's niece, VICTORIA, was made Queen, was issued on June 21st, 1837, at the Palace of St. James. News of the King's death and the accession of QUEEN VICTORIA to the throne did not reach Upper Canada and Cobourg until August, 1837. The Cobourg Star of August 2nd, 1837, announced these events. The newspaper carried heavy black lines, a symbol of mourning for the deceased monarch.

The official announcement of the above death and accession as recorded in the Cobourg Star of Wednesday, August 9th, follows:

"PROCLAMATION of Queen Victoria"

"On Monday morning last, pursuant to instructions from the Lieutenant Governor, as noticed in our extra of last week, HENRY RUTTAN, Esquire, Sheriff of the District, accompanied by a highly respectable assemblage of Magistrates and other gentlemen from both Counties, proceeded at twelve o'clock, in accustomed state, to the Court House (formerly Amherst) and then and there made Proclamation as follows:

Wheras it has pleased Almighty God to call to his mercy our late Sovereign Lord, King William the Fourth, of blessed and glorious memory, by whose decease the Imperial Crown of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and all other of his late Majesty's Dominions, is solely and rightfully come to the High and Mighty Princess Alexandrina Victoria, saving the rights of any issue of his late Majesty, King William the Fourth which may be born to his late Majesty's Consort;  
-----We, HENRY RUTTAN, Esquire, Sheriff of the Newcastle District; The Honourable Zaccheus Burnham; The Honourable Walter Boswell; The Honourable



Thomas A. Stewart; Legislative Councillors of the Province of Upper Canada; William Falkner, Esquire, Judge of the District Court; and Richard Lovekin, Alexander Fletcher, and Richard Hare, Esquires, Justices of the Peace for the said District; therefore do hereby with full voice and consent of tongue and heart, publish and proclaim that the High and Mighty PRINCESS ALEXANDRINA VICTORIA is now, by death of our late Sovereign, of happy and glorious memory, become our only lawful and rightful liege Lady Victoria, by the Grace of God, Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, Defender of the Faith, saving as aforesaid, Supreme Lady, Etc. of this her Majesty's Province of Upper Canada, to whom, saving as aforesaid, we acknowledge all faith and constant obedience, with all hearty and humble affection; beseeching God, by whom Kings and Queens reign, to bless the Royal Princess Victoria with long and happy years to reign over us."

The Procession then moved rapidly in the following order to the eastern extremity of King Street, below St. Peter's Church, where it wheeled, and returning to the corners of King and Division Streets, Opposite Mr. Throop's store (S.W. CORNER), the Proclamation was again read and responded to by the hearty cheers of all present.

Mr. Ruttan next proceeded in the same order to Port Hope, where the duty, we are told, was repeated with increased spirit and effect, Altogether, the day passed off with considerable eclat, the ceremony having been conducted throughout with becoming solemnity and respect. Handsome and truly soldier-like appearance of Captain Roger's well mounted troop added much to the interest of the scene.

#### ORDER OF PROCESSION

High Constable

Trumpeter

Troops of Cavalry under Captain Rogers, two by two

The Sheriff in his carriage.

The Honourable Zaccheus Burnham, Treasurer, in his carriage.

Magistrates and other Gentlemen in their carriages.

Gentlemen on Horseback.

Gentlemen on foot.

We might mention here that Cobourg became a corporated town under the management of a Board of Police on July 1st, 1837, practically at the commencement of the reign of Queen Victoria. Previously, the Village of Cobourg was politically a part of Hamilton Township and subject to the annual Town Meetings. Actually the District Magistrates had all the power for administering local government. The new Board of Police took on the power to administer the affairs of the town.

## The Weekly Newspapers of Cobourg

by Foster M. Russell

The "Old Lady of Division Street" was the central theme in an address, April 27, given by Foster M. Russell, who was editor-publisher of the Cobourg Sentinel-Star for twenty-three years, 1946-1969.

The author and publisher, winner of many honors and awards for excellence and courage in journalism, said the first Cobourg weekly was established in 1831 as a small eight-page newspaper. Living till the ripe old age of 133 years, it was the oldest continuing weekly newspaper in Canada.

In 1961, despite her longevity, the "Old Lady of Division Street" bore the highest circulation crown in her history. Over the years she had weathered the intrusions of eighteen rival Cobourg newspapers, hard times, floods and controversies.

Mr. Russell tabled and displayed original issues of all the eighteen Cobourg weekly newspapers and shared with the Historical Society many anecdotal notes from his extensive research.



## Cobourg's Harbour Days

by Don Dawson and Peter Greathead

In the previous century, the Great Lakes served as the abode for arrays of large and small sailing vessels. The plight of these ships reminds us of the challenge, adventure, and hardships experienced by their crews. Cobourg was a participant in the saga of the history of navigation.

By the late 18th century world trade had evolved into a series of colonial networks known as mercantilism. The system worked on the theory that the colonies would supply the mother country with various raw materials, and in return the mother country would sell back the finished products at a profit. How well a country had done was based on the surplus of gold bars present in the treasury at counting time.

For a while, all the European powers were very successful at the mercantilist game. Spain, Portugal and Holland were particularly successful, then came France and finally England. Unfortunately, England had only one colony that consistently paid its way--India. The rest displayed a tendency to be more expensive. England wished to be rid of her underpaying colonies politically, but maintain profitable trade relations whenever possible; for example, throughout the War of Independence and the War of 1812, England and the 13 Colonies continued to maintain economic trade.

Over the years England attempted to establish two trans-Atlantic routes; one via Hudson Bay, and the other by the St. Lawrence River. By the 1820's, the American government had built the Erie Canal. This route, having been founded in a well-populated area, quickly superceded and dominated the other routes. The United States opened up its interior, and Britain again became interested in American trade as it flourished in the Great Lakes Area. People in settlements on the Great Lakes, regardless of citizenship, prospered because of this American economic growth.

By the 1840's, Great Lake commerce, of which Cobourg was a part, existed in this context. In this manner, Cobourg became a peripheral part of the American/British system.

This commerce was considerable at its peak between 1845 to 1862.

When the first settlers came to Cobourg, there was no harbour or shelter for vessels. With no wharf, the only means of landing passengers and cargo was the "jolly-boat" which was sent to shore from the anchored schooner. Many immigrants and their belongings destined for Cobourg and vicinity landed at Carrying Place, located at the head of the Bay of Quinte. They journeyed the remainder of the way from Carrying Place by foot or wagon. The road, having been built by an American named Asa Danforth around 1800, followed the lake shore from the Trent River. Asa Danforth was engaged by the government of Upper Canada to construct a road 40 ft. wide from Kingston to Ancaster at a cost of \$90.00 per mile. This road took 3 years to build, but it was little better than a blazed trail and it soon fell into a state of disrepair until after the War of 1812 when improvements were made.

Frances Stewart, a pioneer inhabitant of Peterborough County, describes her visit to Cobourg in 1822 in her book, Our Forest Home. She mentions that a small landing-wharf existed at that time. It must not have provided much shelter because a storm arose as the ship approached Cobourg, preventing a landing and necessitating a return to York.

The Rev. Anson Green, the first clergyman in charge of the Methodist congregation in Cobourg, was here in the summer of 1825 when roughly 2000 Irish immigrants landed at Cobourg. "I saw the beach west of Division Street," he wrote, "covered with small white tents filled with Irish immigrants. There was no wharf in Cobourg then, and the landing was somewhat difficult. Those white tents presented a beautiful and attractive appearance. They stretched along the sand beach lying between the lake and a forest of small cedars which covered the worst part of the swampy ground east of Ham's Mills."

Much of the area south of what is now King street was a cedar swamp, with the creek that still runs through the centre of town supplying it with water and forming an estuary at the sandy beach.

In his book, Journal of a Tour, written in 1832, Thomas Folwer wrote that Cobourg possessed two streets running northward. One road had its base at the old wharf which stood at the foot of George Street, and the other ran northward from the new wharf which was at that time being completed at the foot of Division Street.

This new wharf was being built by the Cobourg Harbour Company. In 1829 the province of Upper Canada passed an act allowing for the construction of a wharf in Cobourg. This plan was designed to improve travel on Lake Ontario. The Act specified that the Harbour construction was to commence within one year and be completed within 7 years.

A large quantity of lumber was needed to build the wharf. In the Cobourg Star of January 11, 1831, the following notice appeared:

Wanted for the Cobourg Harbour Company: 500 sticks, pine lumber--30 feet long, and 12" square; 100 sticks, pine lumber--54 feet long, and 12" square to be delivered to the beach, near the harbour, on or before the first of March next.

E. Perry, D. Campbell.

Many difficulties were encountered in getting the "sticks" to the Cobourg Harbour. Helen Schmid in her book Out Of The Mist related some of these problems.

"In the reminiscences of Samuel Copeland, we learn of the problems faced in getting the timber to Cobourg. Copeland was an apprentice in the carpenter trade with Joel Draper who often diverted from carpentering to keeping tavern. Copeland states: "We got sick of keeping tavern, and Joel Draper sold his share in the schooner Maria and we moved back to Clarke on Lot II, Con. 1. He then took a job getting out 600 sticks of timber, 30 and 40 feet long, 12 inches square, for Cobourg Harbour. He was to deliver them. I think this was my first lesson with him in the carpenter business. I was then about 12 years old and did then what would be considered enough for a man now.

He got out the timber along the lake shore about 4 miles west of Kimball's creek (near Newcastle) and hauled it to the bank of the lake and rolled the sticks down the bank into the water, 15 side by side, then put two round poles



of 20 ft. long across, one at each end and bound them together with birch twigs, twisted. The first raft we got to Cobourg alright, towed with one span of horses. It took 5 days. There were 75 sticks. He got there (in all) about 400 sticks. Several times a storm would come on and scatter them for miles and some of them we never got. He was all summer until late in the fall. The last raft of over 100 sticks was towed by the schooner Maria, she got about five miles from Port Hope when a storm came up and the raft was cut loose and we never got a stick of it. That ended the rafting. It was a losing job from start to finish. There was not as much money in it as there was in keeping tavern at Brown's Mill."

The east pier was completed on May 17, 1832. Although it did not constitute a harbour, the wharf, nevertheless, opened up many more opportunities for the growing town. The wharf provided a much safer means of landing belongings and cargo, thus trade was increased. A storehouse was built which extended across Division Street so that wagons could drive through the archway and use the storage facilities on either side.

The Harbour Company took tolls for all goods being landed or shipped once the harbour was capable of receiving and sheltering vessels. This authority extended "upon and part of the lakeshore between the East boundary of lot number thirteen and the West boundary of lot number nineteen in the Township of Hamilton" in addition to the vessels entering the harbour. A barrel of pork, whiskey, salt, beef or lard was charged a six pence toll. Merchandise was also six pence per barrel. Lard and butter was charged one penny, half penny per keg. Two shillings and sixpence was the charge per M of West India staves. Lumber per M board feet was charged a toll of one shilling and three pence. Boats under five tons were not charged; vessels under 12 tons paid one shilling and three pence; and ships over 50 tons were charged a five shilling toll.

The first harbour master was William Kitson. He was also the collector of customs. A man named Langton was the first storehouse caretaker.

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On May 11, 1839, the government passed an act increasing the capital stock of the Cobourg Harbour Company and extending the period for completion another four years. Thus in the early forties, an additional pier was built for the Harbour Company by a contractor named Joseph Metcalfe. This "East Pier", now called the "Centre Pier", pushed out from the old George Street landing and thus for the first time made a harbour capable of providing fair shelter for vessels. A lighthouse was erected in 1850 at the tip of the pier. The total cost of the harbour was about 10,500 pounds or \$42,000.00.

It can be imagined how bustling and exuberant Cobourg became as a result of the harbour. The town was described in Smith's Canadian Gazetteer of 1846 as being "well laid out" possessing "good streets, and many excellent buildings." At that time Cobourg hosted a wide variety of professional people and tradesmen, to in part compose a population of 3,347 people. Smith's Canadian Gazetteer also gives an interesting list of businesses to be found in Cobourg at that date. There were "six physicians and surgeons, seven lawyers, one steam grist-mill, two water grist-mills, two saw mills, one cloth factory, one brewery, three distilleries, one ashery, one soap and candle factory, three tanneries, two foundries, twenty drygoods stores, ten groceries, two hardwares stores, twelve taverns, two druggists, three printers, three book-sellers, two surveyors, five waggon makers, one hatter, two livery stables, one veterinary surgeon, two watch makers, three tinsmiths, five cabinetmakers, ten tailors, two saddlers, four bakers and confectioners, eleven blacksmiths, one marble worker, one pail factory, four planing machines, one machine maker, fourteen shoemakers, three merchant tailors, two barbers, four butchers, three schools for boys, three ladies seminaries, two bank agencies, the 'Commercial' and 'Montreal'."

With the completion of the Peterborough railway in 1854 and the Grand Trunk in 1856, traffic in the harbour boomed. The peak year for the harbour was 1857, during which 14 million board feet of lumber, 8000 barrels of flour and 200,000 bushels of wheat were shipped out of Cobourg.

By 1865 indications were made that the harbour had been

significantly improved since the town bought it in 1850. Both piers were lengthened and the harbour could easily support one hundred vessels. Four steamers and several schooners frequented the town daily.

Due to problems with sand filling the harbour, the government constructed a long breakwater named the "Langevin Pier" after Sir Hector L. Langevin, Minister of Public Works at that time. The dredge which previously performed this function proved insufficient to cope with the accumulation problem. The pier ran out into deep water and well across the entrance of the old harbours and it was completed during the Mackenzie administration in 1874-75. This wharf, along with various extensions and reconstructions using concrete, makes up our harbour much as we have it today.

The site of the original West pier has been mostly filled in. The site of the foundation crib of that first wharf would now be considered far inland, for an immense amount of filling has occurred.

Cobourg Harbour, as previously mentioned, became a part of the Great Lakes trade circuit. The main trade circuit on Lake Ontario began at a centre such as Toronto. From Toronto the vessel would voyage to Dundas, then to Charlotte and on to Oswego, then north to Kingston and to Cobourg. Frequently, stops were made in between these ports at towns such as Lakeport, Brighton or Grafton. This route, of course, varied. Ports of call emerged anywhere there was a cargo to be had.

By 1863, there were roughly 1040 registered schooners; 337 barques, brigs, barges and sloops: 136 side-wheel steamers and 258 propeller-driven craft on all the Great Lakes. The monthly salary for sailers in the 1880's was as follows: \$60.00 for a captain, \$40.00 for a mate, and \$25.00 for sailors and cooks. They were also furnished with 3 meals and midnight lunch each day.

A typical ship to make the Lake Ontario trade circuit was the Prince of Katie Eccles. Her captains were James Shaw and Steven Taylor of Lakeport. Her later captains were



James Dougherty of Colborne followed by Captain Mitchell. The vessel used to fit out at Brighton, load grain in Cobourg, then travel to Oswego for coal, and then voyage to Hamilton. Crew members of the Katie Eccles include Rufus Barrager, Milo Haight and Wesley Lycett variantly of Cobourg and Lakeport.

One of the best known Cobourg Captains was Dan Rooney, who was called "Little Dan" to distinguish him from his uncle Dan who also was a captain. He came from a family of sailors. His uncle, Hugh Rooney, was a harbour master in Cobourg. Little Dan was born in Corktown, Cobourg. His son, Lieutenant John Rooney, served in the navy in World War II. Little Dan was reputed to have accomplished many sailing feats such as sailing two ships at once. How did he succeed at such an amazing task? In order to understand this, one should examine Captain Rooney's motive.

During the first ten years of 1900, entrepreneurs on Lake Ontario were buying up Lake Michigan and Huron ships as the Michigan lumber trade was vanishing. The Richardsons, who were Kingston grain merchants, purchased the Sophia J. Luff. This vessel weighed 253 tons reg. and supported three masts. It was built in 1866. They also bought the Charlie Marshall, a smaller vessel that was built in Chicago in 1881. The Charlie Marshall weighed 219 tons reg. and it also was equipped with 3 masts.

Captain Rooney worked for the Richardsons and made an agreement with them to buy the Charlie Marshall on a profit-sharing scheme. Rooney wanted the ship for his rapidly expanding coal business in Cobourg. Little Dan had the best insurance record on the Great Lakes--less than \$10.00 damage in 60 years of sailing, and Richardson would entrust the Sophia J. Luff to no other captain. A conflict arose out of this, for Rooney wanted to sail the Charlie Marshall. Richardson told him that that would be the end of the Luff. Finally, Richardson agreed to let him sail the two vessels for two separate masters' wages plus his share of the Charlie Marshall's earnings. Typically, Rooney would sail the Charlie Marshall to Oswego from Cobourg to load coal. While the coal was

being loaded, he would travel by steam to Kingston and sail the Luff with its cargo to Charlotte. As the Luff was unloaded, he would take the train to Oswego, run the Charlie Marshall to Cobourg and then catch the Grand Trunk ferry headed to Charlotte where the Luff waited. Obviously he was exceptionally busy. He did make such a profit for everyone concerned that he was able to force Richardson to sell him the remaining shares in the Charlie Marshall.

Rooney made a good living from his investment until World War I when he sold her to be used as a salt water barge. He later sailed a steam barge called the Ralph Campbell. Sophia J. Luff became the property of the Minister of Public Works in 1914. It was 48 years old at that time.

Here is another tale involving Dan Rooney. "He came in such hot haste with the schooner Picton to load 10,000 bushels of barley at Grafton Harbour that she would not stop for him and carried part of the wharf with her up the bank, her round bows pushing the gravel ahead of her on top of the limestone.

He had tried to check her by dropping her centreboard, but, though he got his lines on the spiles, she kept going and took the spiles with her!

Jack Munroe, the harbour master, was just as anxious to get the barley out as Capt. Dan was to get it in, so the loading crews and schooner now got together to save the Picton while the weather was fine.

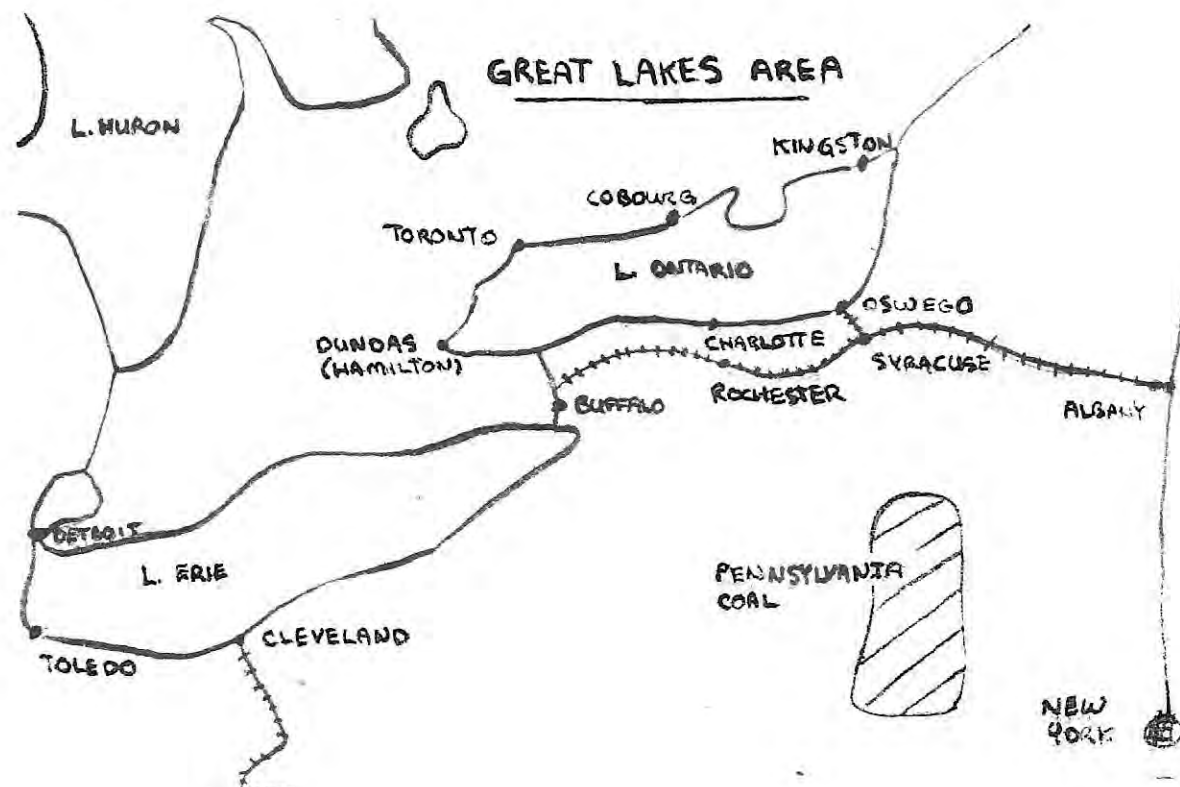
They ran her anchor out to deep water astern, and going overboard with their chains and lines, lightened the ship by a couple of tons. Then they had a strain on windlass and capstan and swung the schooners 60 foot mainboom and 40 foot foreboom, first to starboard and then to port so that she made a trench for herself in the gravel as she listed in the rolling. Meantime, a heavy strain was kept on the anchors all the time by purchase and capstan bar as she moved a little.

When the sea began to slap in from the southward, it raised the water temporarily and everytime she rose an inch, they hove her back a foot. So off she came back into the

battered wharf and they slapped the barley into her, trundling it out on trucks, up gangways, over her rail, and she got loaded and away, none the worse for wear."

Captain Rooney was obviously a resourceful and durable person. In addition to the Charlie Marshall and the Sophia J. Luff, he was master of the Eliza Fisher at age 21, the Annadale, Picton, Annie Falconer and Jessie Drummond.

It took about 100 years for steam to replace sail as the principal method of ship propulsion. The majority of the transition occurred before World War I, as metal and engine technology replaced wood and canvas. Cobourg and Canadian ports like her were always, at best, on the fringe line of the American economic mainstream. When this force moved into a new era, Cobourg was prepared, and ferries became the focus of Cobourg's marine fortunes. The age of sail was gone forever, and all our colourful waterfront individuals became a part of local history and tradition. Economic and political forces are very often unforgiving in their treatment of individuals. Hopefully, this history has in a small way helped us remember some of those people and moments with some fitting dignity.





## The Ontario Car Ferry Company Limited

Peter G. Delanty

In 1905, a charter was granted to the Grand Trunk Railway Company of Montreal and the Buffalo, Rochester and Pittsburgh Railway Company to form the Ontario Car Ferry Company Limited. Fifty-one of the shares were owned by the Grand Trunk while the American line owned the remaining shares. This meant that both ferries would be registered in Canada. In fact, Ontario No. 1 and 2 were the only two Lake ferries to be so registered.

For the American Railway, the ferries would serve as vehicles for handling coal traffic from Pittsburgh to the Canadian markets. The Grand Trunk wanted a cheap and efficient means of obtaining Pennsylvania coal for its steam locomotives in Montreal. The ferries would satisfy both needs. The Lake crossing would save three to four days over the straight rail route around by Buffalo, Hamilton, Toronto and Montreal.

The Lake Ontario Car Ferry Company was similar to the Lake Erie ferries in that its prosperity was dependent on the coal industry of Pennsylvania. A preponderance of the ferry traffic was on the northern route when coal was hauled, while the southern trip was very light. The latter's trade consisted of such staples as feldspar, cyanide and nepheline. It was at this point that the Ontario Ferries No. 1 and No. 2 differed from their Great Lake counterparts, for these ferries were also capable of transporting passengers. The Company took advantage of its large population base at its southern terminus in New York and Pennsylvania States to have an extensive passenger trade during the summer months.

Rochester, New York, was an immediate choice for the southern terminus. It had excellent docking facilities on the Genesee River at Port Charlotte. A railway line ran from this port to Rochester and transported both cargo and passengers. There was considerable debate over the

northern terminus location. Cobourg had the initial advantage of being almost directly north of Rochester, but it lacked a natural harbour. A second advantage of Cobourg was its close proximity to the raw materials to be shipped south. This advantage swung the decision in favour of the Cobourg site and there was the added assurance that the two concrete piers would provided ample shelter for a lake vessel. Cobourg rejoiced!

Choosing a ferry design was easy. The Company just copied those of the Lake Erie ferry, "The Ashtabula," with the added feature of an upper passenger deck. Initially, the Great Lakes Engineering Works, located on Lake Erie, was to build the vessel; however, the Welland Canal was not wide enough to accommodate a vessel of this size. Consequently, the contract was awarded to the Canadian Shipbuilding Company of Toronto. The engines and boilers were built by the Great Lakes Engineering firm.

Ontario No. 1 was launched in April of 1907. It was a twin-funnelled, twin-screwed, steel-hulled car ferry. Her length was 303 feet with a beam of 54.2 feet and a depth of 18.7 feet. These dimensions gave her a tonnage of 5,146 gross and 3,229 net. The four single-ended scotch boilers delivered steam at 175 p.s.i. to two triple-expansion engines. This machinery produced 350 nominal horsepower. Her top speed was 15 miles per hour.

At capacity, 30 fully-loaded hopper cars could be transported per crossing. There were four tracks with two tracks leading across the dock apron and the turn out to the wing track on each side of the ship coming from the inside track on the opposite side.

The ship's hull and deck were painted white while her two raked funnels were buff with black tops. This colour scheme remained during the whole life of the ferries. The total cost of Ontario No. 1 was \$370,000.00

Under the captaincy of F. D. Forrest, Ontario No. 1 made her maiden voyage from Port Charlotte on November 19, 1907, arriving in Cobourg with a cargo of 28 cars of bituminous coal. The fifty-five mile crossing was smooth and uneventful.

Cobourg, having visions of becoming a major port, celebrated greatly. In the afternoon, the ferry returned to Port Charlotte with 28 empty hopper cars. This problem was to plague the line for all of its existence.

It was not until 1909 that the Ontario Car Ferry Company began advertising its passenger service between Memorial Day and Labour Day. This service was for four days a week. The schedule had the ferry leaving Rochester at 9:15 a.m. and arriving in Cobourg at 2:45 p.m. After a 75-minute stop-over, the return trip began at 3:30 p.m. The time to cross the lake on the northern half of the trip was five hours and four and a half returning. The vessel could carry 1,000 passengers with berths fitted out for 90 people. There was a grand dining room complete with panelled walls and fine china and silver diningware. This room could be converted into a ballroom for dancing after dinner. At first, the promenade was open to the elements, but an overhang was added to provide protection for the passengers. Another addition was a stern pilot house so that the vessel could be navigated, stern first, into her slip at either dock. Prior to this, an officer would go to the stern during docking via a gangway running down along the top of the ship and, by use of signal flags, tell the Captain, at the bow, the manoeuvres necessary for a safe docking.

Ontario No. 1 was an immediate success. Passengers streamed onto the vessel from Rochester using the passenger train which ran from there to Port Charlotte for added convenience. Travellers came all over the Niagara frontier and from Pittsburg. With its cargo and passenger service bringing in considerable revenue, the Company was able to pay each of its shareholders a dividend of \$12,500. This prompted the ordering of a second Car Ferry to be called Ontario No. 2. The Polson Iron Works was commissioned to construct the ferry which was to be a near duplicate of her sister ship. Completion date was April 3, 1915. She ran 307.5 feet in length, 54 feet in the beam, and 20.2



feet in depth. Like Ontario No. 1, she had twin stacks, twin screws and was steel-hulled. There were four boilers capable of supplying steam up to 180 p.s.i. The colour scheme was identical to that of her sister ship.

Thirty standard coal cars of 70 tons each could be accommodated on the car deck. The promenade deck was sheltered. Twenty-four two-passenger staterooms were on the forward end of the vessel. Behind these rooms were a music room, smoking room, ladies cabin, and a buffet and formal dining room, with a seating capacity for thirty-two diners. Total passenger capacity was rated at 800 first class and 200 second class. Trial runs were held through the summer of 1915 and she made her inaugural run on October 1, 1915. Although the two vessels were near duplicates, one could be distinguished from the other in that Ontario No. 2 had an enclosed pilot house which was raised, while No. 1 had an open bridge above the pilot house and all navigation took place from here. The first Captain of No. 2, now regarded as the flagship, was Captain Forrest. No. 1 had its chief officer, Captain Redfearn.

The Company had an outstanding safety record; however, there were several near misses. On January 6, 1924, Ontario No. 1 sailed from Genesee Harbour and soon found itself in a heavy gale with 20 foot waves and 75 mile an hour winds. After making only one and a half miles in one hour, Captain Redfearn decided to run with the storm, and set off for Toronto. By radio, he instructed the Cobourg offices to have the lighthouse keepers light their beacons along the shore for guidance. The sea was so rough that, at Bowmanville and Newcastle, the keepers could not get to the lighthouses. At Port Union, an enterprising C.N.R. agent put fusees along the shore as an aid.

The vessel finally reached Toronto at 2 a.m., January 7, but Captain Redfearn dared not try to enter the harbour because of the rough seas. At dawn, the vessel was finally docked. There was three feet of ice on the spar deck, huge icicles hung from the promenade and there was over a foot of water in the hull. It was not until January 8, three

days after setting sail, that Ontario No. 1 steamed into Cobourg Harbour with all hands safe. Cobourg citizens rejoiced, and the Town Hall bells and church bells rang out. St. Peter's church bells played "The Doxology." Throughout the ordeal, the officers had to navigate from the open bridge, suffering severely from the storm. Shortly afterwards, the bridge was enclosed.

On August 5, 1924, Ontario No. 2 was attempting to return to Cobourg in a dense fog with 930 passengers on a church excursion. Captain Forrest misread the fog horns, and the steamer grounded on the sandy bottom. Passengers had to be removed by smaller boats and barges to the pier, and the ferry re-floated.

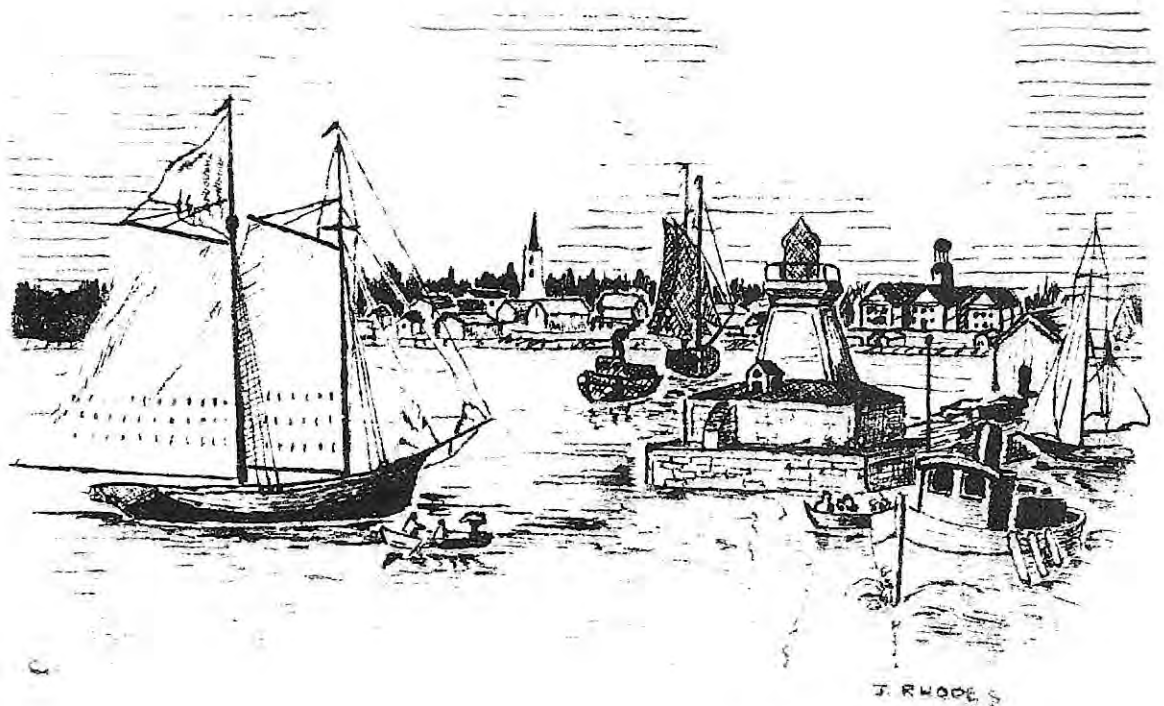
Another near mishap had occurred about a year earlier when No. 1 and No. 2 collided with each other in dense fog and both ships were considerably damaged.

One other incident worth mentioning happened on February 26, 1936, when Ontario No. 2 was stranded two and one half miles from Rochester in blizzard conditions. Frozen in solid ice, she was not freed until March 6 by Ontario No. 1 with Captain S. H. McCaig at the helm. The ferry, remarkably, was none the worse for wear. Many other incidents are recorded of near misses and difficult crossings; however, right to the end, no tragedies were connected with either of the two vessels.

The 1910's and 1920's represented the golden era for the two steamers and the Company. With the advent of the Depression years, hard times hit. The Grand Trunk Railway ceased to exist, and was absorbed by the Canadian National Railway. A similar fate came to the Buffalo, Rochester, and Pittsburgh Railway in 1932 when it merged with the Baltimore and Ohio Traffic, both freight and passenger, dropped during the 1930's. To keep the ferries busy, both vessels were leased out for excursions at various places around Lake Ontario. By the 1940's even these excursions could not prevent financial losses from mounting. In 1945, the ferries carried 854,916

tons of cargo; by 1949, this was reduced to 425,651 tons. As late as 1945, the Company transported over 43,000 passengers per year. However, by 1949, this had dropped to 22,000 passengers. Coal was no longer king, oil and the diesel locomotive were just coming into their own by 1950. Even for the coal needed, Canadian National was relying on Nova Scotia to provide it. It was cheaper and just as plentiful. The handwriting was on the wall when the 1948 financial statement showed the Lake Ontario Car Ferry Company had lost \$190,000 that year. In addition to its financial woes, the burning of the Noronic, a pleasure steamer, in Toronto, in 1949 with the loss of many lives made safety standards much higher for lake vessels. A complete refit for the ferries would have cost over one million dollars.

Ontario No. 1 made her last voyage in August, 1949, and on Sunday, April 30, 1950, Ontario No. 2, under Captain William Bryson, was laid up for the last time in Cobourg. By the end of 1951, both ships had been scrapped and their presence became only a memory.



Cobourg Harbour from Picturesque Canada, C1880



by the Fenians in the spring of 1866 resulted in call-out and expansion of the militia. The announcement by the Mayor on 17th March 1866 that a company of Garrison Artillery was to be formed in Cobourg met with a ready response. Capt. J. H. Dumble recruited this unit. The Saturday Morning Post of April 5, 1890 states in a brief history of the unit that most of his men came from the Highland Company formed in 1864 by a Capt. Roulton but not yet equipped. The mystery is whether the Highland Company was another name for #2 Rifle Company or was it another Infantry Company? At any rate when the Cobourg Battery (or Company) of Garrison Artillery paraded they had a piper lead them.

Before we take action against the Fenians let us join a 24th of May Queen Victoria's birthday celebration in Cobourg as portrayed by the editor of the Cobourg Sentinel in his issue of 26 May 1866.

Headline: Review and Reception 10,000 People in Town  
At 10 a.m. the 3 Companies fell in before Victoria Hall, then led by Prof. Chalaupka's brass band paraded to the wharf to meet the Volunteers from Port Hope coming on the Corinthian with about 600 aboard and the Rochester with about 200 including the Mayor. All 5 Companies marched through Division and King Streets to the Commons for a grand review. Brigade Major Patterson took command and put the troops through 25 distinct movements lasting till 2 o'clock, then lunch in Mr. Sutherland's building. Officers in the Cobourg-Port Hope Rifle Company-- Capt. Fraser, Port Hope Infantry Company--Major Williams, Cobourg Artillery--Capt. J. H. Dumble, Cobourg Infantry Company-- --Capt. Elliott, Cobourg Cavalry--Lt. Col. Boulton. The Artillery was frequently complimented on their firing and marching. At 4 p.m. guests had a grand banquet in Victoria Hall put on by Mr. Pauwel and nothing like it has ever been seen in this city. There were six tables to seat 600, band music, toasts and a choir from Rochester.

Now for action vs. Fenians. The 2nd Infantry Company had been called up first. It was at a town luncheon for them in Victoria Hall that the Mayor's announcement of the Artillery unit was made. More infantry swarmed into town from all over the county. These were fed in Victoria Hall



by the ladies of the town. The cavalry of the area, the Prince of Wales 3rd Canadian Dragoons under Lt. Col. D'Arcy Boulton, also served. Infantry detachments went to garrison and guard Kingston, the cavalry and Artillery, the latter with 46 men under Capt. J. H. Dumble, Lt. W. I. Stanton and 2nd Lt. J. D. Armour, served at Fort York as a guard there from 3 to 19 June. The editor of the Cobourg World visited them there and I have culled from his paper a resume of his remarks. "The Cobourg Battery was put on sentry duty and drill with the Artillery pieces of the garrison. They helped put stores and ammo on a war vessel with alacrity. The boys do their own cooking, cleaning, bed making, doubtless novel work for some of our merchants, lawyers, mechanics and clerks to roll up their sleeves, then roll the dough, figure with the broom and then fix the room. The least apt has become quite proficient in these duties. They are happy in the service. The bedsteads are of iron with 2 blankets and 1 coverlet besides a mattress and pillow stuffed with straw. Reveille 6 a.m., breakfast 7 a.m., dinner 12 noon, tea 6 p.m. and lights out 9:45 p.m.. Anyone found out after lights out without a pass is accommodated with a shake down in the guard room for the night." Daily ration 1 lb. of bread per man plus meat and potatoes for dinner. Tea, coffee, sugar are supplied at the canteen at regulation prices which are very low. The Battery has won the respect of other troops and the citizens of Toronto. The cavalry and the Battery were escorts and pallbearers for the funeral of the men of the Q.O.R.'s killed at the battle of Ridgeway.

They returned to Cobourg on the 19th as did Capt. Elliott's infantry which had been in Kingston.

If my remarks tend to stress the Artillery please forgive me as that is primarily what I started my main military search about. However, I have tried to include the other arms as I have come across them. Next I would like to set forth a typical inspection by the "brass". I forgot to mention that the infantry and artillery had their armouries in Victoria Hall. I am not sure where the cavalry had theirs after 1864 when they lost all their accoutrements, stored on the 5th floor, in the Globe Hotel fire.



On Monday 4th February 1867 Lt. Col. Patterson held the quarterly inspection of the company of Garrison Artillery. All the men were put through the manual of (foot, rifle) drill, platoon drill and others by Adjutant Smith. They were highly complimented by the Col. for the proficiency they exhibited was highly creditable to themselves and their officers; Capt. Dumble's Company was second to none in the Province. After the inspection Capt. Dumble said it was very gratifying to him and his brother officers to hear these high and well dressed ecomiums and he hoped the Cobourg Battery would ever maintain this reputation, earned by their soldierly appearance and deportment. He then very cordially invited all personnel to adjourn to Pauwel's House to partake of an oyster supper.

Mr. Pauwel or rather Gunner Pauwel doubtless profited not a little by his sojourn with the Battery at the old Fort Toronto last summer as he evidently knew the particular vanities of its members and provided accordingly. (He had been cook there.) After ample justice had been done to the edibles and the usual toasts made, the Battery dispersed well pleased with the happy manner in which they had spent the evening. On 5th October 1866 the 40th Battalion of Northumberland Infantry was gazetted--all the companies of the county were united in this Battalion with headquarters in Cobourg.

Let us turn now to two events in 1867, first showing the Volunteers part in the 24th of May celebration of that year as set forth in the Cobourg Sentinel of Saturday May 25th 1867. Here are the units with the numbers and commanders:

Cobourg Garrison Artillery Company	(46) Capt. Lumble
Cobourg #2 Infantry Company	(42) Capt. Elliott
Cobourg Rifle Inf. Company	(42) Capt. Graveley
Colborne Infantry Company	(42) Capt. Vars
Coldsprings Infantry Co.	(42) Capt. Jefford
Grafton Infantry Company	(42) Capt. Rogers
Castleton Infantry Co.	(42) Capt. Duncan
Cobourg Troop of Cavalry	(35) Lt. Col. Boulton
Cobourg Juvenile Infantry Co.	(15) boys under Master Hewson)



The Artillery Company was led by their piper David Ross with a newly imported instrument costing \$80. All the volunteers marched to Victoria Square (head of George St. just south of G. T. R. Tracks.) performed manoeuvres and were inspected by Brigade Major Patterson. He complimented everyone, especially calling attention to the Juvenile Co. He had no doubt should volunteers be called to defend our frontiers, that the manly little Britishers would do their part. A feu de joie was fired at 4 p.m. at Pauwel's House (Hotel) (present Bank of Commerce). There was an all ranks Ball in Victoria Hall with Prof. Rundell's Quadrille Band playing and discoursing the best of music during the night.

The second event was the part played by the Volunteers in the First Dominion Day celebrations. Again we quote both from the Cobourg Sentinel and the Cobourg World. "Bells pealed from midnight for one hour, continuous discharge of small arms and cannon took place till dawn (I do not know where the cannon came from for as yet the Cobourg Artillery had no guns). At 10 o'clock the several Volunteer Companies assembled: the cavalry under Lt. Col. Boulton, the Artillery Capt. Dumble, #1 Infantry Company Capt. Graveley, #2 Company Capt. Elliott, the Coldsprings Co. Capt. Gifford, the Grafton Co. Capt. Rogers. Headed by the 40th Battalion Band they all marched from the Armouries (Victoria Hall) to the vacant land near the Drill Shed where Lt. Col. Smith reviewed and exercised them and as usual they did themselves proud by their soldierly bearing and military skill. A feu de joie was fired at 12 o'clock. In the evening the band of the 40th led a huge torchlight parade.

Here a word about the Drill Shed. The Town built this for the Volunteers on the site of the present lawn bowling club. It was inspected and approved by the Army inspectors in October 1867. In the November 29 edition of the Cobourg Sentinel there was a notice of a \$5 reward for information leading to the arrest of person or persons responsible for breaking the windows in the shed. Apparently it was poorly built, was insured for \$2500 but had no lighting. The officers of the Volunteers bought coal oil lamps so it could be used at night.



Camps were held in various locations each summer or early fall for training and manoeuvres. Here are some extracts from the 1870 camp standing orders. The infantry Battalions trained on the Ruttan property N. of the present General Foods; the Artillery in the field beyond Boulton's woods (south of CICI East).

--in camp 15th September 1870 near Cobourg

--mention a few names of promotees--Williams, 3 Hinmans, Bull

--mention a few names of officers--Capt's. Floyd, Graveley  
and Bonnycastle

--orders for 11th September include canteens

--parades

--latrines, church parade

So much for the infantry; the rules for the Artillery camp were much the same. The Cobourg Artillery actually fired their 'big gun', a 32 lb. Muzzle Loader received in July 1867, from Weller's Hill at a distant cask anchored about 1200 feet from shore. They had 2 hits out of 21 and smashed it. A retired R.A. Lieut. Morton watched them and said "so many dhots fell nearas would have hit a small vessel lying broadside." Some of the staves drifted ashore and were carried triumphantly ashore, under the flag, as the Battery marched home. Upon the break-up of camp the Adjt. General expressed great pleasure after his inspection of the Northumberland and Durham, townships of Cavan, the Cobourg Battery of Artillery and the 40th and 57th Regiments. Camp broke up 23rd September.

E. C. Guillet mentions that four men served in Col. Garnet Wolseley's expedition against Louis Riel's first rebellion in 1870; several men from the 40th Battalion served in B Company of the Midland Battalion in putting down the second rebellion. A gunner Pratt of Cobourg also served in the Artillery in this 1885 campaign.

Over all these years there was the keenest rivalry in rifle shooting between the various Volunteer units. Capt. Dumble had recruited some members of the MacNachtan family for his Battery, E. A., D, N.F., and another E.A. These men were for the most part crack shots and often prevailed over their infantry rivals. In fact E. A. went to Wimbledon,



not for tennis, but for musketry and came home with 5 prizes. The cavalry's connection with Cobourg ceased in 1895 when its headquarters was transferred, first to Colborne and then to Peterborough

In 1899 8 members of the 40 Battalion and 4 from the Battery went to the South African war. Four of the infantry did not return but all the gunners did. Their names were Bolster, Bull, Cockburn, Turpin. There is an amusing story about the return of one of the gunners. Sgt. Bolster came home in September 1900. The Battery met the train and drew a carriage with Bolster in it to the Town Hall for a celebration; much the same for Turpin and Cockburn in October but in November Sgt. Bull caused a furor--politics being involved. The Cobourg World of 9th November 1900 had a headline "Reprehensible Conduct by Major Floyd". There was an election on. Major Floyd went to Belleville, met the train carrying Sgt. Bull, took him off, waited an hour for the next train. This happened to be the Tory election train stopping in Cobourg. The World's editor being a 'hot Reformer' turned the heat on Major Floyd and the Tories for this reprehensible conduct.

I think this is an appropriate place to stop as we leave our Volunteers, infantry and artillery, to carry on their training eventually leading them into the carnage of W.W.I.

