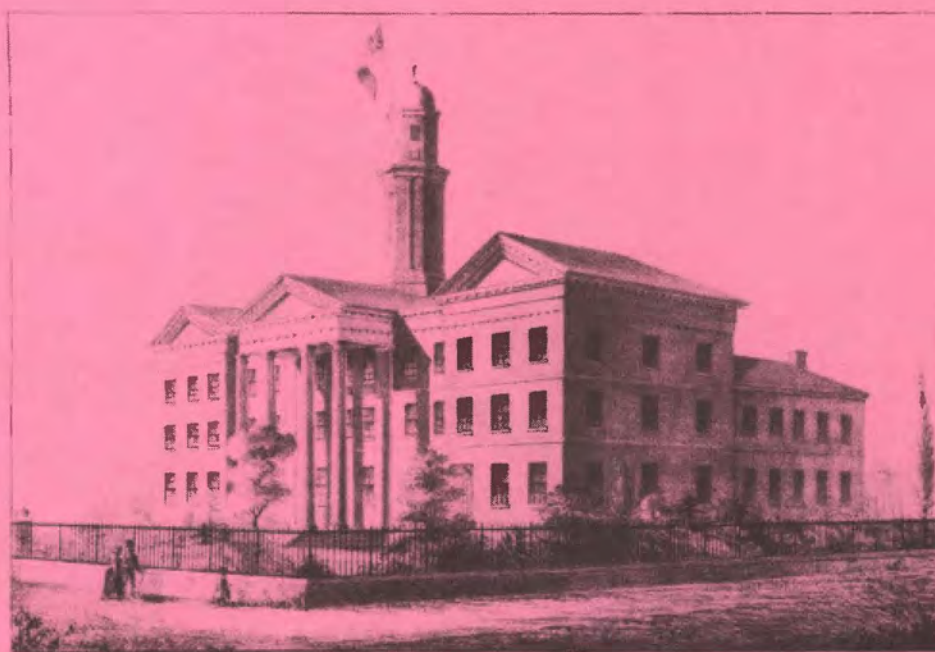


# HISTORICAL REVIEW 10

1991 - 1992



VICTORIA COLLEGE COBOURG O W.

*Dedicated to the Rev. Fr. Mac Nabb, President  
By his affectionate pupil, A. H. Drankli.*

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HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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## HISTORICAL SOCIETY PROGRAMME 1991-1992

### September 1991

SPEAKER: Norma Martin  
*"The Hon. Henry Hamilton and His Times"* Page 1

### October 1991

SPEAKER: Una Outram  
*"The Victorian Garden"* Page 12

### November 1991

SPEAKER: Elizabeth McNeill Galvin  
*"Isabella Valancy Crawford"* Page 20

### January 1992

#### Film Night

*"The Archival Trail"*

*"To The Queen Mother, With Love"*

*"Hatfield Remembered"*

Page 23

### February 1992

#### Heritage Night

SPEAKER: Col. Gordon King  
*"Two Military Families of Cobourg"*

Page 25

### March 1992

SPEAKER: Don Mikel  
*"Designated Buildings of the Township of Hamilton"* Page 35

### April 1992

#### Annual General Meeting

SPEAKER: Kenneth Eoll  
*"A Canadian's Britain"* Page 40

In Memoriam

Page 41



## *THE HONOURABLE HENRY HAMILTON and HIS TIMES*

Norma Martin

Norma Martin came from Belleville to speak on her recent research into the life of Henry Hamilton (1734-1796), after whom Hamilton Township was named. In a lively and well illustrated talk, she traced his life from birth in Ireland, through his military career (he fought with Wolfe at the Plains of Abraham) to his subsequent position as Lt. Governor of Detroit, Governor of Bermuda and in 1794, Governor of Dominica.

Great changes took place in Europe and North America throughout Henry Hamilton's life. Countries were constantly at odds with one another, if not at war. Hamilton was closely associated with these events and his life is full of adventure from exalted states to the most abject.

Henry Hamilton was born in 1734, the son of a member of the Irish Parliament for Donegal and collector of the Port of Cork. At the age of 21 he was commissioned ensign in the 15th Foot and promoted Lieutenant in September of the following year.

It is necessary to understand the situation in North America in order to talk about events in Hamilton's life.

From the first appearance of the French along the St Lawrence and the British on the New England coast, the two cultures were on a collision course. Their objectives were incompatible. The French wanted the fur trade and the British wanted settlement.

In 1756, the Seven Year War broke out with Great Britain and Germany allied against France. In America, the French under Montcalm, enjoyed victories for two or three years but in 1758, with increasing naval power, Britain determined to conquer New France.

Their first goal was the great French fortress at Louisbourg. It was here that Lt. Hamilton's career in North America began. Louisbourg was constructed by France between 1718 and 1740.

In 1745, New Englanders along with British regular troops, had captured the fort. This campaign was the first time that the American colonies had worked and fought together. But two years later, in accordance with the Treaty of Versailles following the War of Austrian Succession, Louisbourg was returned to the French. This was a great blow to the New Englanders.

The British soon realized their mistake in giving up Louisbourg which became their first objective in 1758.

The Fortress was under siege for two months before the French surrendered. This was the turning of the tide in favour of the British in North America. When the great Fortress was again in British hands, British Prime Minister Pitt ordered it leveled to the ground.

Col. Jeffery Amherst led the British attack on Louisbourg in 1758. Amherst had been called a "shadowy figure in the background, overrated, incompetent and insecure". The most evident leader at the siege was 31 year old Brig. General James Wolfe.

The next French bastion was to be attacked at Quebec.

It was Wolfe whom Pitt chose to lead this expedition.

Wolfe's regiment if not the best, was certainly a model one. Wolfe set out from England the following Spring with a small but picked army which included Henry Hamilton.

We know the outcome of the Battle of the Plains of Abraham and the capture of Quebec City in 1759.

Chevalier de Ramezay surrendered to the British four days after the battle.

It was in Kent House, built in 1648 and one of the oldest buildings in the City, that the signing of the capitulation took place. Prince Edward, Duke of Kent and father of Queen Victoria, was garrisoned there in 1791-94.



In the Spring of 1760, Montcalm's successor, Chevalier Levis, who had not been summoned from Montreal the previous autumn to support Montcalm, now advanced from Montreal. On April 18, Levis defeated Wolfe's successor, Murray, in a battle outside the walls of Quebec at St Foye. One of the British officers exclaimed in a parody of the Anglican liturgy, "from April battles and Murray generals, good Lord deliver me".

It was during this battle that Henry Hamilton was captured by the French.

The French were often hard pressed to control their Indian allies who relished a massacre and scalp taking. Hamilton's captors told him that they could only assure his safety to their quarters if he donned a French uniform. Without hesitation he put on a white coat of a French officer and speaking perfect French in a commanding voice said, "Allons, mes enfants, marchez". His captors caught the irony of the situation and everyone laughed. Hamilton received excellent treatment and was soon exchanged.

When British reinforcements arrived by sea in the Spring, the French fell back to Montreal which capitulated later that year in 1760. The fall of Montreal ended French rule in Canada.

For the next sixteen years Hamilton served at various posts including Havana, Cuba, where he was appointed Captain; Trois Riveres; a command posting at Crown Point, New York which included the whole of Lake Champlain and the Richelieu waterway; and in 1767 he was a brigade major with Lt. Governor Guy Carleton, (later Lord Dorchester and Governor of Canada), who recommended him highly.

Hamilton left North America with his regiment for a period of seven years and returned in 1775, stationed at Montreal.

Meanwhile changes were taking place in Quebec.

The Treaty of Paris in 1763 set the terms of peace between France and Great Britain. In Canada, the first question which pressed for solution was that of the relations between the conquerors and the conquered. The population of Quebec was almost

wholly French. The form of government, laws, usages, customs and religion were very different from those of the British.

At first there was the intention to anglicize Canadians by a process of denationalization. But opposition among British legislators forced the gradual abandonment of the policy set down in 1763. Murray, first Governor of Canada, supported French culture and was at odds with the English merchants in Canada who pressed for an assembly. He was recalled and replaced by Sir Guy Carleton.

But he too sided with the French and refused to call an assembly. He had a great respect for the French culture and was not sympathetic to the English merchants many of whom had followed the army to Quebec with the expectation of profits. His views carried the day when the British Parliament passed the Quebec Act in 1774. The only concession to the English merchants was the extension of the boundaries of the province to include the Old North West, Ohio, Michigan, Wisconsin, Illinois and Minnesota.

This area was the source of furs which was the main trade of merchants. The flag of Great Britain flew from Hudson's Bay to the Mississippi and east to the Atlantic.

The annexation to Canada of that huge tract of land seemed logical at the time since the access to it was through Canadian waterways and most of the inhabitants, apart from the natives, were French. The Americans did not view it that way however. To them, it was yet further grounds for rebellion.

At this stage of his career, Henry Hamilton stated that he felt his education had been classical and his interests political; in addition, a military career was not traditional in his family. It was said that he "had a thoroughly civilian mind, a thoroughly civilian conception of government". Whether these were entirely responsible for his decision to sell his commission in 1775 or whether the appointing of civil governorships had a bearing on it, we do not know. Whatever the case, when it became necessary to appoint officials with the symbol of British authority to govern the western area acquired by Canada, Hamilton was appointed Lt. Governor at Detroit.



In 1775, following Carleton's instructions, Hamilton set out for Detroit. By this time the American War of Independence had begun and Canada was under attack. He had to pass through General Montgomery's lines disguised as a peasant. He arrived on November 9, 1775 after a long and perilous journey. He was four days in a canoe and "unprovided with everything".

Detroit was established by the French in 1695 to resist invasions of the English. It was the first settlement of a real colony, with farmers, artisans, merchants and women, west of Montreal.

The Fort of Detroit was a large stockade about 20 feet high and 1200 yards in circumference, enclosing upwards of 80 houses. It stood within the limits of the present city on the river.

Hamilton described the abundance of wood, fish, fruits and prairies for grazing. "As to the climate it is by far the most agreeable I have ever known...The houses are all of log, shingled. They build on the borders of the strait and occupy about thirteen miles in length on the north and eight on the south side...The appearance of the settlement is very smiling".

Hamilton described his quarters "as open to the incursions of the Natives".

He complained about having no Indian Council but his bedroom.

Later he said, "I am having a variety of distractions, the Savages holding their Councils in the Very room where I now write".

"I can scarce boast to ildness of a Savage Chief who goes far beyond me in bearing all sorts of inconveniences with apparent indifference".

Hamilton found "no British spirit in Detroit" and complained to Carleton that loyalty was but a name. He found that all of his labours were undermined by the secret intrigues of the rebels.

Hamilton, as a civilian governor, was neither fully empowered to carry out his task nor was he directed as to how to proceed. At one point, he even made a trip back to



Quebec to receive instructions only to find Governor Carleton was absent on military duties.

Carleton was likewise beset with grave problems and the Lt. Governors in Indiana, Illinois and Michigan felt they were left largely on their own.

There were serious altercations between Hamilton and his inferior officers. At one point the whole town was in a turmoil. Finally Carleton ordered a replacement for a recalcitrant captain.

Another thorny issue involved the judiciary. Philip Dejean had been a judge in Detroit before the British takeover when his authority was terminated. But without a replacement, Hamilton allowed him to continue acting. Hamilton was indicted in 1778 by the grand jurors of the District of Montreal for tolerating illegal actions by Dejean. Given Hamilton's equivocal position and lack of directives it is not surprising that Governor Haldimand (Carleton's successor) excused his actions on the grounds that the paramount need was security in the midst of war. The British government took the same view.

Being so far from the conflict between the rebels and the English, there seemed little danger of an organized military attack upon the Fort at Detroit until George Rogers Clark and his Virginians made an expedition against the Illinois Country in 1778.

Kaskaskia in Illinois surrendered to Clark without a shot being fired. Through the intervention of Father Pierre Gibault, a man of great influence up and down the Mississippi River, who hated the English, Vincennes in Indiana decided to raise the rebel flag.

Hamilton was faced with the possibility of an expedition against Detroit once Clark arrived at Vincennes.

Hamilton asked for instructions from Quebec but before any arrived he set out in October 1778 for Vincennes with 162 white men and 70 Indians. They carried a Union Jack to hoist in place of the Stars and Stripes. Perhaps, too, he wanted to be quit of Detroit where he had spent three difficult years.

When the Vincennes militia saw the British Redcoats and Indians, they lowered the rebel flag. The Indians rushed in, seized the horses and turned the fort upside down in a search for rum. Hamilton promptly placed guards over the alcohol then posted guards to prevent anyone from leaving. He hoped to trap Clark. However, one man did succeed in escaping to warn Clark. His warning was invaluable to Clark who decided on a surprise attack in mid-winter. Hamilton was forced to surrender unconditionally.

Hamilton had great difficulty in treating with Clark over his surrender. No one was more hated by the Virginians than Hamilton. They had heard that he had encouraged Indians to attack an American frontier settlement. Their hatred was based largely upon the assertions of Dodge, a rascal and a scoundrel, capable of more atrocious crimes than Hamilton was ever credited with. It was Clark, however, who gave Hamilton the sobriquet of "the hair buyer general". A century and a half passed before American historians conceded that there was no positive proof that he had ever offered rewards for scalps. A scholarly study into this allegation was published in the "Canadian Historical Review" in 1930. The author's conclusion is that "there seems to be no warrant for believing that Henry Hamilton was a hair-buyer, or any more to be censured than other leaders on both sides of the controversy".

Hamilton was carried off to prison at Williamsburg.

In the mind of the Governor, Thomas Jefferson, and in the eyes of the Virginians, no punishment was too bad for Hamilton.

A letter of June 16, 1779 from the Williamsburg Clerk of Council stated that Lt. Gov. Hamilton, Philip Dejean and William Lamothe were prisoners of war. "The council has resolved to begin on them with the work of retaliation, and to put them in irons, confine them in the dungeon of the public goal, debar them of pen, ink and paper, and exclude them from all converse but with their Keepers...Hamilton has been loaded with irons."

The gaol was badly overcrowded. Gaol fever broke out among the prisoners and many died, although the fever was controlled somewhat by cleaning the vaults and washing the floors with vinegar and sprinkling them with wild mint.



Haldimand criticized Hamilton mildly for undertaking the expedition without his specific authorization. Great sympathy for Hamilton, however, was aroused by the cruel treatment he suffered at the hands of his captors. Lamothe fell seriously ill and another friend of Hamilton committed suicide in the gaol.

If Thomas Jefferson had had his way, Hamilton would have ended his days in prison but Lord Dorchester, commander in New York, wrote to General George Washington on his behalf.

Others, too, wrote on his behalf and in time, Hamilton was offered parole but he refused it. Finally, Washington wrote to the Governor of Virginia that he would be "embarrassed" if, in further exchange of prisoners, the much discussed Colonel Hamilton were not included. Jefferson relented and in 1781 Hamilton was released.

He returned to England and soon learned that he had been chosen Lieutenant-Governor of Quebec replacing Cramahe. Once again he was to find himself in trouble.

Although Hamilton had had a good relationship with Governor Haldimand he found himself at odds with him from the first days of his appointment. They were on opposite sides in the Legislative Council. Haldimand supported the French party which urged the least possible change while Hamilton supported the English merchants and wanted a greater measure of English institutions in the province.

Haldimand returned to England in 1784 but he remained Governor until 1786. For the next year and a half, two Lt. Governors ruled in his stead: first Henry Hamilton, then Sir Henry Hope. Haldimand made Hamilton's work difficult for him by refusing to show him documents or give instructions or to discuss matters. He gave Hamilton documents on the day of his departure but even then he did not include dispatches to London. Once again Hamilton was a civilian governor with meagre instructions and no military authority. Hamilton complained in 1784, "He (Haldimand) gave the helm into another person's hand, but would not entrust me with the management of an Oar".

While Haldimand was in London promoting his points of view, Governor Hamilton was finding it difficult to maintain the confidence of His Majesty's

government. His enemies unkindly accused him of pro-American views, forgetting what he had earlier suffered at the hands of the Americans.

He sealed his fate, however, when he outmaneuvered Haldimand in the appointment of lessees for the King's posts. A curt letter of dismissal ordered him to hand over authority to Sir Henry Hope and to return to England at once. The sailing of the last ship left him no time even to sell his furniture.

Elizabeth Arthur wrote of him in the "Dictionary of Canadian Biography", "it was his misfortune that the American revolution and its aftermath created circumstances that doomed his mission not only at Detroit but also at Quebec.

From 1785 to 1787 he was humiliated and financially embarrassed.

In 1786, Carleton returned to Canada as Lord Dorchester for his second term as Governor. He evaluated some of the problems which Hamilton had faced and concluded that Hamilton had acted within his power. As a result a new appointment followed Hamilton. He became Governor of Bermuda.

In 1785, Bermudan Goodrich asked for a "spirited Governor". He and others felt a major war was approaching and Bermuda should be a fortress like Gibraltar. "A vigilant governor was the great need", he wrote. Whether this request was being answered or whether it was what a later writer surmised, namely "the idea of keeping a gallant and ardent military gentleman on the active list" that prompted Hamilton's appointment we do not know. Nevertheless, Hamilton did a commendable job. Upon his arrival on September 19, 1788, he was announced as "one of the most amiable men living".

During his governorship he fortified the harbours. He tried to start a farmer's market to encourage the production of food, always in short supply. He promoted a marine academy "to provide the youth with theoretical and practical instruction in navigation and seamanship" but London would not support this endeavor.

He presided over the chancery court, usually in his own house, "with such detachment and dignity". The Governor had a "fine sense of equilibrium".



Life was not without its social aspects which had provincial overtones. The announcement of an electoral celebration of a turtle dinner asked the participants to "bring your own plate and liquor".

For quiet evenings of enjoyment there was a regular foursome of whist with a doctor, a captain and his wife.

He was genuinely concerned for the welfare of the island and its inhabitants. The 24 year old daughter of an American colonel was recuperating on the island. "Gov. Hamilton was almost a daily visitor to enquire after the invalid and give advice as he could, but he never came in 'least he incommode' someone.

When war broke out with France, streams of refugees from the French West Indies were being exploited by American shipmasters and British privateers. Hamilton had 400 on his hands at one time and was at his wit's end how to clothe and provide for them. Once again on his own, without any orders about them he could, as he said, "only be humane".

Dr Forbes, councillor and one of the four whist players, in his regrets at Hamilton's departure, remarked that "it was the ironical fate of St. George's that he who had done the most for our old town should be likewise the very person to give his name to the new one".

The new capital, Hamilton, was begun in 1793.

When Henry Hamilton left Bermuda, the Assembly voted 300 pounds for him to buy a piece of plate, "as an acknowledgement of the high sense the inhabitants of Bermuda entertain for His Excellency's unremitted attention to the welfare and security of these islands".

In 1794, after six years in Bermuda he became governor of Dominica in the West Indies.

Dominica lies halfway along the string of islands between Cuba and Trinidad. An appointment to mountainous, wild Dominica seems an unlikely progression or

regression of Hamilton's career. It was the last island in the Caribbean to be colonized.

In 1764, would-be British settlers were warned that Dominica was "not the promised land, flowing with milk and honey".

During the 1700's it bounced between French and British control with Britain securing permanent possession in 1805.

It was here in the West Indies that Hamilton spent the last two years of his life, not uneventful years.

In March, 1795, at the age of 60, Hamilton married Elizabeth Lee and became the father of a daughter. The following year, while still Governor of Dominica, Hamilton died in Antigua.

I do not know exactly who named this Township but we do know that John Graves Simcoe, first Lt. Governor of Upper Canada, had the townships surveyed. And it was indeed Simcoe who chose Hamilton. I believe he chose well.



## VICTORIAN GARDENS

Una E. Outram

The subject of the Victorian garden was a great drawing card for the October meeting. Una Outram from Peterborough, by means of an overhead projector along with her lecture, gave us a picture of the Victorian garden and all its accoutrements. Along the way she told those attending, about the advent of the lawnmower (1830) and its great importance by the 1860's, the late Victorian practice of carpet bedding in fancy patterns to copy oriental rugs and other intricate designs, the careful planting of trees so that outdoor games like tennis and croquet could be played and the great fondness of the Victorians for the unusual and for evergreens.

During the Victorian era (1837-1897) in England there were a great number of wealthy people who were able to employ numerous gardeners to facilitate the grand and grandiose displays of vast estates and gardens. Many were industrialists who wanted a place in the country to impress their friends.

The lawnmower had been invented in 1830 and factory machinery encouraged speedy reproduction of cast iron seats, vases and greenhouses. All kinds of foreign plants were introduced for putting in beds on the lawn in summer and from 1836 until 1914, the head gardener dominated their staff and often their employers too. The head gardener had many plants to draw from - pelargoniums, dwarf blue lobelia, calceolaria, scarlet salvia, dahlias, zinnias, mignonette, verbena and many more. Clarkia, godetia and phlox drummondii were from California. Subtropical bedders appeared such as cannas, eucalyptus for impressive foliage and all this wealth of new plants created more lavish gardening. This style of gardening is still carried on by municipal parks boards but little is seen in the Great Gardens of Britain under the care of the National Trust. Colour is provided by roses and other perennials because of the high cost of labour.

Fern rockeries were very popular and many great walled gardens were brought to a high state of cultivation during the Victorian era.

Horticulture was also kept alive by owners of smaller houses and humble cottages. The 19th century saw a remarkable awakening to the beauties of flowers and numerous books were written, specialist societies formed and flower shows organized, particularly in the Midlands and the north where miners and factory workers turned to growing flowers during their spare time.

J.C. Loudon, the leading landscape authority in the 1840's, invented the term "gardenesque" which was a description of an effort to design a garden to show off the plants. Rose gardens, pergolas and treillage with the clematis Montana and wisterias could change an ugly building or arch into a thing of beauty. The Victorians treasured any abnormality in plants such as shrubs and foliage other than green and they adored evergreens.

Rock gardens certainly existed in England from the 1700's but there wasn't an urge to cultivate rock plants until the end of the 19th century. In North America rock gardens never reached the exuberance seen in some of the English rockeries but it did go through the "raisin pudding" stage and heaps of soil and stone were piled in the middle of lawns to grow whatever.

Arbours were popular from the 15th century until the 18th century when they disappeared. They returned in the Victorian years with the pergola and summer house being popular for years because of all the climbing varieties of roses and flowering vines that Victorians adored.

Rhododendrons from North America started many a woodland garden in England. The American snowberry was also introduced and made itself at home as it does here. The age of specialty had arrived not only in the industrialists gardens but among small cottage gardens also. Most of the Victorian extravaganzas have been simplified to suit today's conditions but enough are left to give us an idea of what was enjoyed.

Two interpreters, William Robinson and Gertrude Jekyll tried to unify the numerous collections of all sorts of species and suggested a better use of all the new and old plants. Robinson's book "The English Flower Garden", first published in 1883, did much for the gardening public. He disliked garish bedding schemes intensely and tried to establish classical architecture in the gardens. As early as 1870 he decried carpet bedding as "pastry cook gardening" and called for a return to mixed plantings of perennials and wild flowers. Before long, Gertrude Jekyll was also calling for the same but it wasn't until the turn of the century that the reaction really reached America. Jekyll was a wonderful artist and had a great appreciation for colour. She translated painting into terms of gardening and colour gradations which are still being followed today.



Victorian gardens in England had an influence in the North American population but because of the harsher climate and the short time it had been settled there was a considerable difference.

By the middle of the 19th century, gardens in North America were more organized and were planted to please the senses as well as to supply herbs, medicine and foods. The vegetable plot was usually separated from the purely ornamental plants, which might include some shrubs as well as flowers, arbours and swings and the garden began to be viewed as a nicety rather than a necessity.

Originally, there was a greater distinction between the terms "yard" and "gardens" than we may make today. Gardens included any area where plants were grown and tended, whereas a "yard" was a smallish enclosed area where animals were kept such as "barnyard" or where work and chores were done. Dooryard gardens were just an enclosed, small yard at the front of the house where flowers were grown. A lawn of tended, mowed or clipped grass fell into the garden category and was a luxury of maintenance and space. The advent of the lawnmower provided a much lovelier lawn by the 1860's, when croquet games became very popular.

Areas were allocated for various gardens including orchards and fruit bushes or larger home animals such as goats or a milking cow or chickens. Paths and drives were probably earth or gravel and sometimes stone if available.

Foundation planting as we practice it today was unknown in the first half of the 19th century. Frequently a shrub was planted at a corner of the house and deciduous trees were planted to the south and west to provide summer shade. Individual shrubs were planted, but the shrub border was not usually used in the gardens.

In 1841 a young nurseryman from Newburgh, New York, by the name of Andrew Jackson Downing, wrote a book called, "A Treatise on the History and Practice of Landscape Gardening" which became an overnight success and revolutionized the middle class garden styles. The neat, geometric ordered garden was out, replaced by man-made "nature with soft, curving masses of green". Downing evidently gleaned many of his ideas from the leading British landscape authority of the day, J.C. Loudon who had conveniently published his book on landscape gardening the

previous year. They were the two most influential men in landscape gardening in Canada and the United States during the 19th century.

There were a number of reasons for the overnight success of Downing's book. It was written by an American specifically for the American scene at a time when national pride and self-confidence was on the upswing. Life styles were changing with the growth of industry, and the many solid citizens benefitting from this growth felt that their gardens no longer needed emphasis on simple survival. The outdoors was increasingly regarded as a place to play rather than as a hostile environment. Also, the introduction of exotic plant material including colourful annuals and a marked increase in horticultural journals did much to interest the public in improving its surroundings. The passage of fence laws had a strong influence on the householder's view toward improving his property. Fence laws obligated the owner of livestock to contain the animals, whereas before, the burden of fencing had been on the gardener to keep free roaming animals out of the garden.

Downing described landscapes in the Beautiful and Picturesque design and suggested that architectural styles and improvements should complement each other. The Beautiful was thought to embody grace and harmony, hence it was represented by softly flowing grassy lawns studded with stately, regular shaped trees and shrubs. Curving paths wound among the trees on the grounds and in the flower garden a path might be cut through the lawn, which was broken by curly-shaped flower beds. Flowering shrubs such as mock-orange and lilacs were preferred. The Picturesque ideal emulated wild nature. The total effect was much less carefully groomed and harmonious than in the Beautiful mode. The goal was to produce a raw roughness appropriate to craggy stones, rushing water and dark thickets. By using irregularly shaped trees, especially conifers, and planting in tighter groups to simulate natural groves, this type of design could be obtained. Paths through the grass and woods were even more meandering and rustic. Downing was also a great advocate of the use of vines to soften and give character to architecture. Vines growing up on wires were used to screen areas of the verandah or porch from public view. He formulated an American Cottage style which we associate with board and batten siding, trellises and verandahs.

By the 1880's two features were considered essential to a businessman's home - a fine lawn and large trees. The development of the lawnmower did a lot to



popularize the fine lawn. Instead of designating certain spaces within the lot for planting grass, the entire lot was thought of as a lawn and plantings, drives, etc., were cut out of the grass area, much as a subdivision builder does it today. Most suburban houses concentrated their landscaping efforts on the front yard as the side yards were usually quite narrow and the backyards continued to be taken up by the carriage houses, privies, woods, coal sheds, drying yards and vegetable and fruit gardens.

During the 1860's in England, hanging baskets became the rage. Mrs Beeton's "Book of Gardening Management" states that the introduction of suspended baskets was the purpose of displaying the beautiful habits of trailing plants. It was much slower to become popular in America but by the 1880's they were planting baskets of verbenas, petunias, lobelia and leafy coleus, vinca, ivy and ferns. The most used plants were the Victorian favourites - the pelargoniums or semi-hardy geraniums. Ivy leafed was favoured too and fuschias and lantanas as well.

After the Civil War in the United States carpet bedding was practiced and reached its peak in the late 19th century. Single species beds, particularly in clustered designs, continued throughout the century. By 1870 more elaborate designs were coming into vogue. The new style was called ribbon bedding or carpet bedding because it usually involved contrasting rows or "ribbons" of plants arranged in such patterns as would make a beautiful carpet. Actually they were trying to represent Persian carpets in many cases. Sometimes the beds would be representational such as a flag, the name of a town, a basket of flowers, etc. We still see these today. Most frequently the beds were just patterns. To better show off the design, carpet beds were sometimes planted against a slope or mounded in the middle. Plants in the middle were the tallest with plants dropping down to the lowest at the edge. The fanciest effects were seen in public gardens, where the bedding-out of tens of thousands of plants was not unusual. Crowds of people would go to see the latest designs. Simpler carpet beds for private homes was illustrated in many books, magazines and seed catalogues of the period. Right up into the early 20th century homeowners with any pretensions to style would not have been without a bright bit of carpet bedding in the middle of the front lawn.

Victorians adored Wardian cases and bell jars within which they planted a variety of plants. Our bottle gardens are modern versions of the Wardian cases which were



originally built to carry plants home on ships that travelled to new lands and countries. Rustic furniture was being used on porches, verandahs and lawns along with lovely iron urns, chairs, benches and some tables.

Cemeteries were the first landscaped areas to be enjoyed by the public. They often spent holiday occasions strolling through the grounds admiring the flowers and trees. This seems like a bizarre practice today but most cemeteries were nicely landscaped and had colourful flowerbeds and bushes so the practice of walks and decorating graves and socializing served its purpose in many ways.

One of the oldest and most attractive city parks in North America is the Public Gardens in Halifax, Nova Scotia. It covers a city block with the entrances at the corners and was originally part of the South Common on Spring Garden Road. The Horticultural and Agricultural Societies began the Public Gardens in 1841 and it enlarged over a period of years to the present size. Hanging baskets adorn the light standards and many lovely flower beds are massed with colour amongst the more than one hundred varieties of trees and shrubs growing on the property. During the warmer months a band plays on Sundays in the ornate scarlet roofed Victorian bandstand that was built in 1881. It is a very historic site!

Many horticultural societies were started during the Victorian period. The Toronto Horticultural Society was founded in 1834. Fortunately, the society gave the Horticultural Gardens to the city in 1860 as a park which is now known as Allen Gardens. It became a beautiful and much frequented spot for walking and enjoying after Sunday church. Somewhat better than strolling through a cemetery! the Peterborough Horticultural Society was founded in April 1861 and is celebrating 130 years during 1992. The first specialist florist society in North America was the American Rose Society started in 1899 by the New York Horticultural Society.

Many Loyalist families visited their relatives and friends in the United States over the span of many years after the Revolution and no doubt brought back some of the new and less familiar flowers and shrubs to Canada. The Rochester Nurseries were favoured as suppliers to the Niagara and Toronto districts and several American nurserymen had agents in Canadian towns so orders could be filled quickly since daily shipments were made across Ontario. Most likely more quickly than today. Because of this easy access to plants in the northern United States I have always felt



that many of the gardens along Lake Ontario and inland, contained many of the same plants as contained south of the border and consequently feel that we can use many of these species in historic garden restoration if not noticeably hybridized.

### Fertilizing

Superphosphate was the only manufactured fertilizer in England for nearly 80 years. It was derived from treating bones or calcium phosphate with sulphuric acid. It was developed in 1817 but not patented until 1842. J.C. Loudon in 1834 knew the value of using animal manures but did not have a good understanding of mineral manures mainly different kinds of lime, sulphate or iron, bone, wood ashes.

Composting was well known from the Greek and Roman periods of history and many people relied entirely on compost plus animal and sewage sludge. We are returning to this method again today.

In 1885 the copper based Bordeaux Mixture was used as a fungicide against mildew on grapevines. Syringes of many kinds came into use to spray liquid insecticides and fungicides. It was not until 1941 that the first organic insecticide came into use as DDT but it has been legally banned for several years in most parts of the world. It is clear enough that there is no easy way to garden even in this age of mechanization and labour saving devices.

I would like to close by noting that Jeanne Minhinnick's book, "At Home In Upper Canada" expressed her feelings of the gardens she remembered and it paints a picture of what many early gardens were like in Victorian times in Ontario. She helped us remember our past and the lovely, aromatic blooms of yesteryear.

### Bibliography:

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"An Illustrated History of Gardening" - Anthony Huxley.

"At Home In Upper Canada" - Jeanne Minhinnick.

"From the Ground" - Marjorie Major.

"Whatnot - A Compendium of Victorian Crafts" - M. Henderson & E. Wilkinson.

"Old House Journal" - April 1985, "Carpet Bedding" - Scott G. Kunst, Historic Landscaper.

Sources for seeds and flowering plants, roses:

Pickering Nursery Inc.,  
670 Kingston Road,  
Pickering, Ontario,  
L1V 1A6.

Pine Ridge Nurseries Ltd.,  
P.O. Box 222, Brock Road North,  
Pickering, Ontario,  
L3V 2R4.

Select Seeds,  
Department CH,  
180 Stickney Hill Road,  
Union, Ct., USA,  
06076.



### ISABELLA VALANCY CRAWFORD

In November, Elizabeth Galvin of Peterborough, talked to us about the life and literary works of Isabella Valancy Crawford (1850-1887), a writer born in Dublin who spent much of her life in Lakefield and Peterborough, where she is buried. Ms Galvin showed a video to accompany her talk and through this and her readings from some of Crawford's work, gave an illuminating glimpse of a little known early Canadian writer. What follows is a "Cobourg Daily Star" article on the talk.

A seminal figure in Canadian letters wrote some of her greatest work in the Peterborough area, members of the Cobourg and District Historical Society learned at their November meeting.

Elizabeth McNeill Galvin herself a poet and playwright, was the guest speaker, evoking the life and times of Isabella Valancy Crawford, who lived from 1850 to 1887. Her life was brief with its full share of sorrow, said Galvin, but her legacy has been rich.

"In the 19th century, Canadian culture was not nearly as important as survival" she said, "Literary patronage did not exist."

Furthermore, she said, those poets who did practice their craft "imitated and used the themes and techniques of contemporary American and British poets...it is with Isabella Valancy Crawford that Canada's poetry comes of age."

Galvin screened a biographical video she prepared on Crawford's life. Its title, taken from the epitaph on her Peterborough tombstone, is Isabella Valancy Crawford "Poet by the Gift of God".

Born on Christmas Day, 1850, to a Dublin, Ireland family who were "cultured and educated people," Crawford had a father who was "afflicted with wanderlust." Being a doctor he had the means and opportunity to satisfy his itchy feet.

Of the 13 children in the family, only Isabella, Emma Naomi and Steven Walter reached adulthood. Emma and Steven were born in 1854 and 1856 respectively.

By 1857, Dr Crawford had obtained a licence to practice in Upper Canada. He emigrated to Paisley, Ontario in 1857 and the family followed in 1858. But prosperity eluded them as he became addicted to alcohol.

The family left Paisley suddenly and under a cloud of scandal. While serving as town treasurer, Dr Crawford had been suspected of misappropriation of funds. The family resettled in Lakefield.

"It is in this setting our poet emerges," said Galvin - "in a Catharine Parr Traill-Susanna Moodie environment".

The Lakefield years also saw Crawford produce stories, novels and fairy tales, she added. "We feel intuitively from her nature poems that these were good and happy years".

Dr Crawford's practice continued to be unsuccessful and the family moved to Peterborough. Here, Isabella set to work writing seriously, hoping to supplement her family's income. Although some of her literature was published, she was paid very little.

Following her father's 1875 death of heart disease, the family fell into difficult financial straits despite the return of brother Steven from Algoma to contribute what he could.

Sorrow was added to poverty in 1876. Naomi mailed an embroidery design to the Philadelphia centennial exposition, hoping to sell it or perhaps win a cash prize. It was lost in the mail. She died later that year of consumption and was buried in Little Lake Cemetery. It was in that same year that Isabella won a \$600 prize in a short story contest. But only \$100 was paid to her before the sponsoring corporation went broke.

"In Isabella's writings there is no hint of self pity, and yet one feels the strongest spirit would despair as tragedy succeeded tragedy." Galvin commented.

Isabella and her mother moved to Toronto, where Dr Crawford's brother John was able to provide them with an allowance until he went blind.



But Isabella's work met with some success in Toronto as more poems were accepted for publication, a novel of hers was serialized in a newspaper, and some American magazines began publishing her short stories and poetry. At least the American periodicals paid her for her work, said Galvin - which was not always the case with Canadian publications.

In 1884, she published 1000 copies of her poetry collection, "Old Spookses Pass" at her own expense. It was "almost ignored" in Canada but met with critical praise in London, England.

"Her versatility is awesome" Galvin said of the book. "She wrote a number of dialect poems, the most unlikely of which (the title poem) was in cowboy dialect."

Another outstanding poem, "The Rose of a Nation's Thanks", paid tribute to soldiers returning from the Northwest Rebellion.

The subject matter also encompassed Indians, farmers and nature, capturing "the dogged, hopeful spirit of pioneer settlers."

It is estimated only 50 copies were actually sold.

Crawford died in Toronto February 12, 1887, of heart disease and was buried in Little Lake Cemetery in Peterborough. Her epitaph, "Poet by the Gift of God", was added by a friend.

Note: This article was written by Cecilia Nasmith and is reprinted with the permission of the "Cobourg Daily Star".

## FILM NIGHT

*THE ARCHIVAL TRAIL* - was an introduction to the role archives play in the community. One rationale for retaining archival material was demonstrated through the use of archival documents to successfully conclude legal disputes for the City of Windsor.

The film took us through the preliminary steps required in the retention and conservation of archival materials. Only after the basic archival procedures of appraisal, accession, processing and conservation are complete can the materials be accessed.

Then, as a working resource centre, the archives can provide a number of historical, educational and documentary services to the community.

*TO THE QUEEN MOTHER, WITH LOVE* - was a compilation of highlights from the Queen Mother's eleven trips to Canada. In documenting these visits, first as a young Queen accompanying her husband, King George VI, in 1939 and ending with her most recent in 1989, the film illustrated Her Majesty's inherent graciousness and the warmth she displayed towards Canada and Canadians. The film also presented a clip of Cobourg resident Muriel Flexman who, having covered the first royal visit reporter, was invited to participated in the most recent one.

*HATFIELD REMEMBERED* - featured Hatfield Hall, Cobourg's private girls' school run by Miss Winifred Ellis and Miss Winifred Wilson ("The Wins") from 1929 to 1951. Wonderful clips from older movies and photographs, augmented by personal interviews and narration, recreated the character of the school and highlighted its history.

These marvellous vignettes were complemented by the efforts of the alumnae to acknowledge the school's close association with St Peter's Church, Cobourg, which culminated in May 1991, with a reunion and the dedication of a stained glass window in the church.



Cobourg resident Jane Seatter Allen one of the school's teachers, was interviewed in the film.

All three videos are available in the Cobourg and District Historical Society Archives.

## TWO MILITARY FAMILIES OF COBOURG

Col. Gordon King

Colonel Gordon King was the speaker at our February meeting. Born in Uxbridge, Ontario, he came to Cobourg as a high school teacher in 1935. Army service saw him in England and northwest Europe during World War II. He returned to Cobourg in 1946. From 1953 until his retirement in 1972, Colonel King was Principal of C.D.C.I. West Collegiate. The programme focused on two military families of Cobourg from 1860 until World War I. Thomas Henry Dumble who built "Dromore" on George Street, came to Cobourg from Ireland. He and his son John Henry Dumble, were active in the Militia and the Cobourg Battery. Three generations of the MacNachan family were also associated with the Cobourg Battery and involved in active service in World War I.

### Preamble

The title of this talk as advertised said "Military Families of Cobourg", but that is a misnomer as when I jotted down names of such I stopped when I reached more than 30. Rather than keep you here until Thursday, I put a limit on the number and the period. I limited the number to two families whose military activities cover the period from the 1860's to World War One. If I mention others it is only incidental to the main theme.

Does the term the Aroostock War mean anything to you? Its aftermath was the instrument that eventually brought to prominence the Dumble family of Cobourg. The United States and Britain thought by the Ashburton Treaty of 1842; that they had settled the boundary between Maine and New Brunswick. But the settlers around Aroostock clashed and eventually both sides had troops there. There was no war, as saner heads prevailed and a commission was set up to settle the dispute. Thomas Dumble, lately arrived from Ireland (in 1844) and settled in Cobourg, was called to be one of the Commissioners. He was a captain in the Royal Engineers. Thomas was in charge of the British section of the delineation of the Maine - New Brunswick boundary. He took with him his son John Henry, age 17, who was given a job as surveyor. His particular task was to sketch the topography of the district under dispute. Thus began a career of wide dimensions for young John from his birth in 1829 to his death "in harness" in 1903 on the 23rd of November.

Upon completion of their task, father and son were engaged in surveying the route for the Imperial Railway, a route that was subsequently selected for the Intercolonial



Railway. When they returned home eventually (I imagine they did not stay in northern N.B. in the winter months), John entered Victoria College to complete his education and then turned to an engineering career. Some of his accomplishments in this field were surveying the road from Cobourg to Hastings, taking soundings for the Victoria Bridge in Montreal, engineer in charge of the Grand Trunk Railway Division between Shannonville and Cobourg, then Chief Engineer for the Cobourg and Peterborough Railway. For his engineering services he was made a life member of the Smithsonian Institute. He was an expert on the expansion of ice, doing his testing in Cobourg and in Rice Lake.

At age 32 realizing that his engineering duties took him away from home so much, he decided to study Law and he did so under the aegis of James Cockburn. When he qualified he entered into partnership with Cockburn. One of their ads in the "Cobourg World", besides advertising their legal profession, stated that they had money to invest at their office in Victoria Hall, east wing, 2nd floor front. Eventually Dumble set up practice by himself. Later he was made Junior Judge in the Counties Court. Giving this up he was appointed Town Solicitor, Police Magistrate and Master of the Chancery. Once he threatened to sue the Town when they reduced his salary. He held the rank of Captain in the Militia, a Highland Company. Let us leave him there for the present.

Let us now turn to the second of the military families that I wish to bring to your attention - the MacNachtans. Edmund Alexander MacNachtan was born in 1825 in Drumore, Scotland. After working for his two brothers in the mercantile business for some time, he emigrated to Canada in 1844 and first worked in Oshawa in a drygoods store. Next he moved to Orono where he ran a general store.

In 1852 he and a younger brother David, went into partnership on a general store and milling business in Newcastle. Here, Edmund A. started a newspaper but moved to Cobourg taking much of his printing machinery (which he eventually sold to his rival in the printing business). In 1863 he was appointed Counties Clerk. He was a member of the Town Trust, an influential and strong member of the Presbyterian Church and a Sgt. in the Highlands Company. In 1849 he had married Elizabeth Renwick of Clarke Township. They were blessed with four children, Neil, Rachel, Herbert and Edmund A. junior.

Of all the MacNachtans, Neil was the most renowned in Canada. Besides carrying on the family business along with Andrew Jeffery, he found time to be involved in town affairs to a wide extent. He served as secretary of the Hospital Board, as trustee of the CCI Board on which he was instrumental in getting the new Collegiate Institute built in 1901. He was an elder, then Clerk of the Session for 28 years. He was also Church Treasurer and Superintendent of the Sunday School.

All of the MacNachtans had served an apprenticeship in the Militia of Cobourg. Let us now turn our attention to the military side of life of the various men I have depicted here and see their achievements in putting, as I call it, Cobourg's name on the map.

In 1866 the Irish Brotherhood or Fenians, as they were named after a legendary Irish hero, threatened to invade Canada as an oblique method to pressure Great Britain into granting Home Rule to Ireland. In March, Sir John A. Macdonald called out 10,000 militia to oppose this threat. On the 17th, as Cobourg was swarming with infantry and cavalry volunteers, Brigade Major Patterson sent the Mayor word to form a Battery of Garrison Artillery under Captain John Henry Dumble. His company of Highland Infantry volunteered to become Gunners and thus was formed a Battery which eventually made a name for itself across the Dominion.

The ladies of Cobourg were giving the local volunteers a luncheon in Victoria Hall. A week later on the 24th, at another such luncheon, the Mayor made the announcement about the recruiting of the Battery which had been received on the 17th and it had been nobly responded to. They had been invited to this luncheon but had declined as they had no uniforms yet. However, the new Battery men were very keen and did their drill on evenings Monday to Friday in a warehouse on the wharf at the harbour. They finally received their uniforms and all the Militia turned out for the 24th of May celebration of the Queen's birthday.

On May 31, the Fenian threat became imminent. Toronto's Queen's Own Rifles were sent to the Niagara area and all Cobourg's Militia were sent to Toronto, the night of June 1 to garrison the Fort there. Captain Dumble's Battery with E.A. MacNachtan as Battery Sgt. Major, was stationed in the old Fort near the waterfront and did guard duty replacing the Battery of Regulars who were ordered to Fort Erie.



They also helped to put ammunition and stores on a war vessel bound for the Niagara Frontier.

The editor of the "Cobourg World" visited the Battery on June 8 and has this to say about their routine and activities:

"The boys do their own cooking, cleaning and bed making. It is 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 fix up their rooms. The least apt has become quite proficient in these duties - happy in the service (according to the editor). The detachment with 10 men are drilled twice a day on the big guns the whole Coy is also drilled with the rifle.

Their bedsteads are of iron with two blankets and one coverlet besides a mattress and pillow stuffed with straw and quarters are comfortable. The daily routine is Reveille at six, breakfast at seven, dinner at twelve, tea at six, lights out at nine forty-five. Anyone caught out without a pass after lights out is accommodated with a shakedown in the guardroom for the night.

Rations - daily rate of one pd. of bread per man plus meat and potatoes for dinner. Tea, coffee and sugar are supplied at the canteen at regular prices which are very low. The Bty. won the respect of other troops and citizens of Toronto. In fact when they first marched in the citizens thought they were Regulars."

On the Niagara Frontier, the Queen's Own Rifles had nine men killed in a skirmish but the Fenians retreated to Fort Erie. Many escaped across the river and the rest surrendered. The Queen's Own returned to Toronto bearing with them the nine dead and thirty seven wounded. There was a large funeral for the deceased and the Cobourg Garrison Artillery Company was honoured by being selected to be pall-bearer and the horse leader. The Company arrived home on June 19 to the tumultuous welcome by the citizens and the Infantry who had arrived the day before. There was a parade to Victoria Hall where they were dismissed with orders to report again at 8 p.m. to welcome home the Cavalry. A great crowd of citizens plus the volunteers of the Infantry, the Rifles and the Artillery were at the station to

welcome Lt. Col. Boulton and his forty men and forty horses who then led a parade to Victoria Hall where he addressed them before dismissing them, whereupon they all gave hearty cheers for the Queen, then three each for their gallant commanders, Lt. Col. Boulton of the Cavalry, Captain Dumble of the Artillery, Captain Smith of the Rifles and Captain Elliott of the Infantry.

Captain Dumble and BSM MacNachtan deserve the highest praise for their accomplishment in bringing four dozen recruits to such a state of efficiency that they could be mistaken for Regulars. I would now like to carry on with the military relationship of these two men over the years.

Each year they drilled, were inspected, went to camp, helped with the 24th of May celebration and played a big part in the Dominion Day festivities. Their weapons were rifles and the mortar you can see in front of our Legion Hall. The mortar had to be lifted onto a wagon and drawn to Weller's Hill for firing practice at wooden barrels anchored offshore. Marching there and back they were led by a piper inherited from the Highland Company. Finally the Battery received one gun, a smooth bore muzzle loader 32 pdr. on July 2, 1869 - too late to be used in the first of July celebration. They had no drill shed until the Town built one where the Lawn Bowling Club now stands. This was in October 1867, the Town insuring it for \$2500 and, on 20 November, in the "Cobourg World", offering a reward of \$5.00 for information leading to the arrest of those who broke the windows in the drill shed.

BSM Edmund MacNachtan was making a name for himself in rifle shooting. The various units had a Rifle Association. In 1869 Edmund won first prize in the 3rd Brigade Rifle Match. The following year he was gazetted 2nd Lieutenant. That year, Captain Dumble took the Battery to its annual training camp in the field east of Boulton's woods (vicinity of Abbot Blvd.) and the gunners used their 32 pounder to fire 21 rounds at a cask moored 1200 yards offshore. They hit it twice and marched home from camp carrying the staves in front of them.

In 1871 Lt. Edmund MacNachtan went to Wimbledon, England for the annual British Rifle Matches. He returned home in August having won four or five prizes. He was home in time to speak about his overseas trip at a retirement dinner for one of the original officers, Lt. Stanton. Then he and Captain Dumble were off to Camp - this time in Kingston, going by steamboat and being played to the wharf by the band



of the 40th Infantry Battalion of Northumberland. In 1873 MacNachtan won three prizes at the Cobourg rifle shoot and three more at Quebec Association matches. In 1875 he won the Wimbledon Gold Medal. He had 13 medals by this time and they were on display in a store window in town.

In most years some members of the Battery went to Quebec City to qualify for higher rank. Sometimes they went to Toronto. Captain Dumble kept his Battery up to high standards of efficiency. Summer Camp in 1882 was on the Ruttan property between Ontario and Division Streets, south of Elgin Street. There were 1400 Militia in camp including the Cobourg and Port Hope Batterys. By this time, three more MacNachtans had been in the Cobourg Battery. Edmund's brother David, and sons, Neil and Edmund junior who went to the Artillery School in Quebec to get their qualifications as Lieutenants. Neil followed in his father's footsteps as an expert rifle shot which placed him on the Canadian team for Wimbledon.

The Battery sent no men to the Army at the time of the Riel Rebellion but on the home front, there was a benefit concert for the families of the infantrymen who had gone. For this concert, Captain David MacNachtan trained a precision drill team of 22 fair young ladies who were called "The Broom Brigade".

The year 1890 saw the retirement of two originals of the Battery - Captain J.H. Dumble and Captain Edmund A. MacNachtan. They had never missed a parade in all those years. At a banquet in the British Hotel, Captain Dumble was saluted as the "Father of the Battery". Captain David MacNachtan took over command of the Battery with Neil F. and E.A. junior as his Section Commander. The next year they won the Governor General's Cup at the competition in Halifax.

On July 15 1891, Edmund MacNachtan died and was given a military funeral. Neil was appointed Counties Clerk to succeed his father.

The "Cobourg Star" reported on 24 July 1891:

His spirit took its flight just as the sun was reddening the horizon with its effulgent rays. The deceased was a man of sterling qualities and undoubted ability, genial, manly, the void created by his demise will not easily be filled. His funeral was held on

Saturday the 18th. The funeral cortege walked from his home to St Andrew's Church, passing through a detachment of the Cobourg Battery drawn up before the Church. After the service the military headed the cortege along King and up Division to the cemetery where the Battery fired three volleys as the coffin was lowered into the grave. All blinds of all places of business were drawn as the procession went by."

In 1894 Captain David MacNachtan retired and Neil was appointed to the command. He and his brother took the unit to Quebec for the gun competition and again won the Governor General's Cup. At this time a Military Club was formed in Cobourg with Neil as Vice President of the Ontario Artillery Association. For the First of July celebration, Neil took the Battery out on the pier and fired a 21 gun salute, then used an 18 pounder to start the boat races.

In 1896 Neil was on a delegation to Ottawa to try to get a new armoury for the Militia. The closing years of the 19th century saw them both promoted and away to practice camp in the Isle of Orleans and Quebec City. The Battery won all the best prizes and also the Governor General's Cup. There was also time to sponsor a Minstrel Show and Major Neil MacNachtan, to promote this show, marched with the minstrels clad in white costume along King Street at noon led by the Band of the 40th Battalion.

The Boer War in 1899 saw four men of the unit enlist. They were Turpin, Cockburn, Bolster and Bull. They returned individually in 1900 and were welcomed by crowds at the station and by men of the unit who put them in a carriage and drew them to a reception at Victoria Hall. One of the local papers cried dirty politics. There was an election on at the time and W.H. Floyd got Sergeant Bull off the regular train in Belleville and put him on a electioneering train one hour later and thus brought him home to a crowd which had been waiting all that time at the Station. Major MacNachtan presided over banquets held in honour of these men.

Also in 1900, on June 21, Captain David MacNachtan died. He had been Deputy Sheriff for several years but had to retire as he suffered a paralysis which after a length of time caused his death. Although a Presbyterian, he was buried from St Peter's Church.



After 33 years in the Cobourg Garrison Battery, Major Neil MacNachtan retired and as Brevet Lt. Col. took over the 14th Field Battery of Port Hope. E.A. took command of the Garrison Battery. Both were involved in a Royal Review in October 1901:

"Prominent among the trps (sic) that took part in the review on the occasion of the visit of the Duke and Duchess of York to Toronto were the fourteenth field battery under command of Major Neil F. MacNachtan, Lt G.J. Battell, second Lt. John Odell and forty non-commissioned men. Cobourg Battery fired a salute when the Duke of York left the Government House to attend the review and at London upon arrival and departure of the Royal Party. The precision with which the salutes were fired was very marked; the intervals between being in perfect time, which could not be said of some of the other batteries which fired salutes. It is certainly a great honour for the men of the Cobourg Battery to have been selected for these duties."

The year 1903 saw another achievement for Neil MacNachtan for he took the 14th Fd. Battery to Summer Camp at Deseronto, Ontario and won all the competitions even beating the BHA. The Battery was second in the whole Dominion Fd. Artillery whereas three years earlier it had been last.

This same year also saw the passing of Captain J.H. Dumble. He had held Magistrate's Court in Victoria Hall the morning of Saturday 21 November, went home and died of a sudden heart attack. It was a great shock for the town to learn of the passing of one of its most esteemed citizens. His funeral was held in a crowded St Peter's Church on Wednesday 25 November. His son Wilfred, an officer in the Royal Engineers was on duty in London, England at the time and could not return for the funeral. The Northumberland Bar Association attended the funeral in body. The ball bearers were a senator, a judge, a colonel, a major (MacNachtan), the Town clerk and the harbourmaster.

Neil kept busy in Artillery matters. He wrote a training manual, "A Guide for Duties of the Cdn. Fd. Arty.". He conducted a scheme for the Defence of Cobourg against an imaginary enemy which had landed at Presqu'isle. He and John Odell who had taken over the Cobourg Battery from E.A. MacNachtan junior, took an Artillery team to Quebec City in 1908 to help celebrate its ter-centenary. In 1910 Neil

was elected President of the RCAA. In the summer he and Major Odell took an artillery team to the UK for the coronation of George V.

Back in Toronto Neil was invested by the Duke of Connaught with the decoration, "Commander of the Victorian Order". As a confirmed Lt. Col. he was made commander of the 10th Fd. Brigade. He retired from the Bde. in 1913 and in 1913 he was made full Colonel. He carried on with his duties as Counties Clerk until December 10, 1928. Upon returning to his office from a meeting he had a seizure and passed away in the presence of his son Edmund L. MacNachtan who succeeded him as Counties Clerk. Neil's funeral was noteworthy for the huge number who turned out to pay tribute to him and accompany the funeral cortege to the cemetery where a firing party from the 22nd Medium Battery (the successor of his beloved CGA Battery) fired three volleys in salute to him as the casket was lowered into the grave.

So passed one of Cobourg's most remarkable citizens, a man highly esteemed for his broad involvement in municipal and military affairs who had made a name for himself not just in Cobourg but across the Dominion of Canada. A memorial window presented by his daughter Norah in his honour can be seen in St Andrew's Church as you pass along King Street west. Thus passed Colonel Neil Ferguson MacNachtan C.V.O. from the scene.

To conclude this review, I shall be brief.

Captain Dumble's son Lt. Col. Wilfred Dumble served overseas in World War One in the Royal Engineers, returning to live in Cobourg at the house on the southwest corner of D'Arcy and King Streets, known as The Lawn. He died on 19 February 1963.

Colonel MacNachtan's son Major E.L.(Ted) MacNachtan joined the 14th Battery after reverting from Lt. to Sergeant. He was in the first battle of Ypres when the Germans used poison gas (22 April 1915), then spent some time recovering in hospital. He was commissioned again, served again in France, ending as a Captain in F. Battery of the Anti Aircraft Branch. Upon returning, he was appointed as assistant to his father Neil. Upon Neil's death, Ted was made Counties Clerk, a



position which he held until his death in Cobourg General Hospital on May 12, 1947.

David MacNachtan's son Edmund H. served overseas in World War One and was killed when a German shell hit the gunpit where he was serving. Many of the gun crew were killed and wounded.

World War One added many names to fill out the military families of Cobourg - Boggs, Burn, Bolster, Craig, Burnet, Floyd, Hill, Hinman, Hopper, McKinnon, Odell, Peterson and two Padres, Beattie and Duffy.

### *DESIGNATED BUILDINGS OF THE TOWNSHIP OF HAMILTON*

Don Mikel, past chair of Hamilton Township LACAC and a dedicated architectural conservationist, gave an illustrated talk on the built heritage of the Township. Dating back to the early 19th century, the houses ranged from sympathetically restored large properties to tiny cottages, all with features which made them suitable for heritage designation and in some cases, provincial government grants. The presentation brought to many of us a new recognition of the importance of our own built heritage here in Northumberland County.

What follows are brief descriptions of some of the more than forty buildings in Hamilton Township, that are designated heritage properties, under the Ontario Heritage Act. For more information contact the Hamilton Township Local Architectural Conservation Advisory Committee (LACAC).

NEW LODGE FARM, Highway #2. Date: 1829. The origin of the name "New Lodge Farm" is unknown. The original storey and a half white-stuccoed house (with part of the stone foundation above ground on the south side) was built by Col. John Covert of Sussex, England, nine years after his arrival in Cobourg.

Since that time, the building has undergone two renovations. The first, done in 1900 by John Covert's son, Henry, once president of the Cobourg and Peterborough Railway and the Port Hope, Lindsay and Peterborough Railway, added another storey under a Mansard roof. The second renovation was done in 1963 by the late Napier Simpson, a restoration architect, who added Regency characteristics to the structure.

HALFWAY HOUSE, Danforth Road. Date: circa 1810. This rare Wilderness Georgian building is a storey and a half but the full basement, half above ground, gives it the appearance of two stories. According to Edwin Guillet in "Pioneer Inns and Taverns" (1954), it was once an inn; one of the oldest remaining in Ontario. Inside it still retains many of the features of a very old tavern. Tradition says it was used by the British Army during the War of 1812. The house was enlarged sometime in the 1830's or 1840's by the Jaynes family. It has been extensively restored by the present owner.



RENWOOD FARM, Ontario Street. Date circa 1870. The original name of this property was Spring Vale. Angus Crawford, a well-to-do farmer, built this imposing two storey, hip roof, Italianate style, red brick villa for his second wife, Nancy (McCarty) Gilchrist. The facade is almost identical to that of Belgrave, (now Greenwood Tower Inn, Port Hope).

BURNHAM HOUSE, Danforth Road. Date: rear part of the house, circa 1821, front addition, circa 1842. This Neo-Classical two-storey, frame house appears to be two houses joined together. During recent renovations it was discovered that the original clapboard still exists between the front and rear sections. Niram Burnham, who emigrated from the United States to Canada, about 1812, is first listed in assessments as occupying the lot in 1821.

Although a broken tombstone was found some years ago on the property reading "In memory of two infant sons of Niram and Mary Burnham who died 1812", it may have been a memorial. Records show a one storey frame house in 1835, probably referring to the rear section which contains a very old bake oven. By 1842 it was listed as two storey frame house and the front section also has an old bake over.

JACOB GREEN HOUSE, Danforth Road. Date: circa 1870. This mid-Victorian, storey and a half, red brick house with a centre gable, was built by Jacob Green, a farmer of Irish ancestry. It was enlarged in 1935 by Allward and Gouinlock, a Toronto architectural firm, to include maids quarters and other amenities. Peter Stokes, a restoration architect, has written a full description of this building with its 4x4 windows, four-bay arrangement in front, verandah and side posts, all of which are original. The house has been sympathetically restored by its present owners.

HILLTOP FARM, Baltimore. Date: 1895. This Queen Anne Revival brick house with a tower was built by Charles Powell for his wife Agnes. Charles Powell was a wealthy retired businessman from Toronto. Agnes Powell wanted to be near her aged and ailing parents, Mr and Mrs John Lawless of Baltimore. Tragically, she died just after the house was completed and never lived there. Her husband sold the property a few years later and remarried.

BALL'S MILL, Baltimore. Date: circa 1842 with later additions. The original building on this site was a carding and sawmill built by Lambert Stevens in 1842. In 1846 the building was sold to William McDougall, from Berwickshire, Scotland, who changed it to a "flouring mill". The two and a half storey mill shows Classical Revival influences and still retains the original clapboard and cut stone foundation. McDougall's family lost the mill when he went bankrupt after investing heavily in a sawmill in Harwood. It was purchased by John Ball in 1884 and operated until 1971 by three generations of the Ball family. The mill is now undergoing restoration.

ST. JOHN'S ANGLICAN CHURCH, Harwood. Date: 1876. Until this church was built, Anglicans worshipped in the old railway waiting room on the lakeshore. The incumbent of St. George's Church, Gore's Landing, was persuaded that an Anglican church was needed in Harwood. The plan for the building were brought from England and the most distinctive features of the Gothic Revival structure are its very steep-pitched roof and the heavy white roughcast buttresses on the corners. The church is presently closed.

SACRED HEART CATHOLIC CHURCH, Harwood. Date: 1884. Until this small church was built, Roman Catholics in Hamilton Township attended mass in the local hotels, school or homes. When two large sawmills increased the number of Catholic communicants in Harwood, they began to raise the money to build a church. The Sacred Heart of Jesus Roman Catholic Church was dedicated in 1884. After 100 years in use, the building was deteriorating and because the cost of repairs was prohibitive, it was closed in 1989. It has since been purchased for a private house and the exterior is being restored.

THE WHITE HOUSE, Gore's Landing. Date: 1854. This imposing Regency villa has roughcast walls incised to simulate ashlar. It was built by Alfred Harris, hotel keeper, as his residence with guest quarters for retired gentlemen. Some of its remarkable features include three-storey verandahs on three sides giving a superb view of Rice Lake, a large round-headed window at the rear, 10 sets of French doors



and five fireplaces. The house remained in the Harris family until 1944. It is now undergoing restoration.

MAVIS BANK, Gore's Landing. Date: circa 1848. This Regency style cottage is roughcast over a board-on-board construction called the New Brunswick method. One will note the hip roof and French doors opening on to a three-sided verandah with bell-curved roof. It was built by James Mercer, a young gentleman and sportsman, shortly before he married a local girl he had gotten pregnant (according to C.P. Traill). They left the village soon afterward and the property reverted to Thomas Gore. It came into the Harris family in 1870.

ST. GEORGE'S ANGLICAN CHURCH, RECTORY and CEMETERY, Gore's Landing. Date: Cemetery, 1847, church, 1909, rectory, 1926. This cemetery is one of the oldest in the Township. C.P. Traill's memoirs say that four emigrants who fled the 1847 Potato Famine in Ireland and died of emigrant fever, were buried here in unmarked graves. The first record burial was in 1852.

Mrs Traill attended the first service in the original white painted frame church constructed in 1847. The present church is a Neo-Gothic design by J.A. Ellis, Toronto and with a tower designed by the artist Gerald Hayward, who is buried in the cemetery. The church is constructed of local cobblestone with the foundation and bell tower of cut stone. The bell was donated by St. Peter's Church in Cobourg.

The stuccoed, storey and a half rectory was built in the Arts and Crafts design. Until 1926 the clergy either rented or boarded with local families.

SOUTHWIND FARM, Date: circa 1864. This storey and a half Classical Revival house was built of cut field stone by a farmer, John Henderson. It has 6x6 windows and a gothic window in the gable. It is thought that the stonemason may have been George Kennedy of Bomanton, who built similar houses in the area. The present front porch and shutters are modern addition.

BEAVER MEADOWS FARM, Dale Road. Date: 1839. This two storey, Neo-Classical brick house was built by William Sowden, gentleman, who emigrated from Yorkshire, England in 1818 with his family. The Sowdens first lived on this property in a log house built in 1797 as a tavern, and their second house was destroyed by fire about 1833.

The main features of the present house are its pink-red brick thought to be made on the property, beautiful portico, 12x8 windows in the upper storey and the Venetian style windows on either side of the front entrance. This house can be seen in the 1878 Northumberland and Durham Counties Atlas.

RAVENSCOURT, Date: circa 1847. This unique two storey red brick, Regency style mansion was built in the grand manner by Francis Hayward, a gentleman from Buckinghamshire, England. For 30 years it was occupied by his nephew, Captain Alfred Hayward, and his artistic family, who were responsible for the murals on the walls, now badly faded and deteriorated. The house is gradually being restored by its present owner.

Note: Thanks goes to Edward and Diana Cunnington and Catherine Milne for their help in compiling this material.



## A CANADIAN'S BRITAIN

G. Kenneth Eoll

Kenneth Eoll of Brighton, returned to the Society to present a colour slide presentation on the many highlights of his repeated visits to Britain. Mr Eoll's slides of cathedrals, cottages and countryside contrasted with the wild beauty of the Hebrides and the west coast of Scotland. The custom of well dressing, the Edinburgh tattoo, a miniature town or the pageantry of a mediaeval battle re-enactment, all delighted the audience. 'Oh to be in England ...'.

A pictorial ramble through Britain in its gardens, along its coasts, its churches, its houses and castles, its countryside and uplands, its towns and villages, and its spectacles and pageantry.

The slides shown were selected to illustrate what aspects of the scene keep me returning to Britain again and again, twelve times since 1958, the visits ranging from five weeks to four months.

No country in my opinion offers more to the visitor than Britain. There is so much variety crowded within its boundaries, yet it offers extensive open spaces if you are in search of solitude, or the open sky, or places where the wild birds fly.

Every few miles the outlook changes: lush valleys topped on either side by tree bare moorlands or grassy downs, picture postcard villages or busy market towns. The countryside has been groomed for centuries to an unrivalled perfection. Wild places abound - along its remoter coasts and in its mountains and highlands.

Gardens are a British specialty, whether those of an ordinary householder or those designed long ago to produce the masterpiece of today.

And its pageantry and pomp - no country does it better; after all it has been at it for a thousand years.

As Shakespeare has Richard III say:

"This precious stone set in the silver sea. This blessed plot, this earth, this realm, this England."

### *In Memoriam*

In the summer of 1991, the Society lost three of its most committed members - Percy Climo, Barbara Cameron and David Flindall.

Marion Hagen writes - Last February, as part of our Society's Heritage Day programme, Percy Climo presented a number of old school texts to our Archives. Little did we know that it was to be his last appearance in our midst. It was vintage "Percy". His eyes glinting with merriment and full of enthusiasm for his avocation, history, he ended his remarks by leading us all in a rollicking rendition of "School Days".

We will treasure such memories and also treasure the substantial and significant donations he made to our archival collection over the years. Percy Climo - generous, fun-loving, dedicated, public spirited - will be much missed in the heritage community.

Our first and only Honorary Life Member - Percy Climo, 17 October 1906 - 6 June 1991.

Moirra Hayes writes - Barbara Cameron, who served as President of the Society from 1987 to 1988, died on 22 May 1991 at the age of 70.

Her interest in Cobourg's history was keen and prior to her presidency, she was involved in the committee which published "Cobourg - Early Days and Modern Times - 1798-1981" (profits from which were presented annually to the Society) and the Sesquicentennial Book 1837-1987.

A long-time resident of Cobourg, she was an active and devoted member of St Peter's Anglican Church and her interest in history extended to researching the history of the office of verger at St Peter's, a position which she held at the time of her death.

Barbara served Cobourg in many areas and we are grateful for her contribution to the Historical Society and the town. We shall miss her.



David Flindall had a busy general medical practice in Cobourg, having come to live here in 1977, but managed to spare the time to become involved in the work of the Historical Society, acting as President from 1989 to 1990.

His interest in Cobourg's past led to the restoration of his large Victorian house and the search for the 19th century antiques with which he and his wife Anne furnished it. He was an accomplished wood-worker and made many reproduction pieces, completing an impressive deacon's bench in tiger maple in time for the house's participation in the Sesquicentennial House Tour in 1987. David was a hardworking and efficient President of the Society. We remember his contribution with gratitude and a sense of loss.