



Historical Review 13

1994 - 1996



EXECUTIVE 1994 - 1995

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THE COBOURG AND DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY
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COBOURG, ONTARIO
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**THE COBOURG AND DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY
PROGRAMME OF SPEAKERS 1994 - 1995 AND 1995 - 1996**

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**GENERAL FOODS IN COBOURG
BY C. WILSON SPENCER**

INTRODUCTION

It has been said that most human organizations have a beginning, a middle, and an end. This is true for General Foods Corporation (GFC).

The end is easy to pin-point. In the case of GFC, the end arrived when Phillip Morris Inc. acquired all the outstanding shares of General Foods Corporation. GFC then ceased to exist and became a subsidiary of Phillip Morris Inc.

The middle is always difficult to agree upon. It is, we can safely assume, somewhere between the beginning and the end.

But surely it is how an organization got started and survived, how it developed and established itself in the marketplace and prospered or failed, surely this is the interesting part.

Let us, therefore, start at the beginning.

THE BEGINNINGS

General Foods did not begin in Cobourg.

The Cobourg operations had their beginnings in Fairport, NY, a small town near Rochester in the heart of the apple orchard country along the south shore of Lake Ontario. The beginnings were in the hands of a Scottish immigrant named Robert Douglas who came to the USA at the end of the 19th century.

For 14 years after coming to the USA, Douglas studied fruit chemistry in his spare time and, to earn a living, peddled a thermometer used in the manufacture of jams and jellies. From his study of fruit chemistry, his experience with jam and jelly making, and his knowledge of apples, he had an idea to make commercial jams and jellies more reliably, better flavoured, quicker and simpler. For all those years, he studied and experimented. Finally in 1912, he was satisfied with his results.

In that year, Douglas became the first to extract and prepare commercially from apples a substance scientists call pectin. Pectin is a complex carbohydrate, a sort of intercellular cement found in most fruits in varying amounts and most abundantly in apples and citrus fruits. To Douglas, its key feature was its capacity to make fruit juices jell.

At first he sold his product only to commercial jam and jelly makers, usually in 5 gallon tins. During the 1914 - 1918 war, fruit jam with pectin from Douglas was an important item in the U.S. army diet. The business was known as the Douglas Packing Company.

MOHAN HIRED

In 1915, Douglas hired a Canadian chemist named Mohan who worked closely with him in developing the pectin product and the business. This wasn't just another brand or another flavour. This was a new concept, a new food ingredient. Selling the concept, inventing new recipe formulae, instructing the customers how to use this new material, carrying out demonstrations - these were some of the items covered in a program put in place for the introduction and training of commercial users and eventually for the home user under the name Certo - the name suggested by a maid in the Douglas household.

One quaint bit of history is a little booklet prepared by the Douglas Packing Company dated "Revised July 1st, 1916". It describes what Douglas Concentrated Fruit Pectin is and how to use it.

Douglas was obviously both a scientist and an entrepreneur. He must have also been a pretty good judge of people in his hiring of Mohan in 1915.

MOHAN'S ROLE

Richard T. Mohan was born in Brockville, Ontario in 1885 and educated at the Brockville Collegiate Institute. He graduated with a B.Sc. Degree in science from McGill in 1908. While working as an instructor in Chemistry at Queen's, he was granted a M.Sc. degree in 1911. Following three years employment with Canadian Cannery Limited in Hamilton --the Aylmer people-- and a brief period with Duffy-Mott, an apple processor near Rochester, he joined Robert Douglas and the Douglas Packing Company near Rochester, NY. The year was 1915.

From its beginning in 1912, the Douglas business began to show signs of growth. More and more jam and jelly makers discovered the benefits of using Douglas' new fruit pectin. The hiring of Mohan must have been part of the company's plan for growth. Douglas wanted to expand northward into Canada. This would open up a new market. More importantly, it would provide the means to build an export business from Canada by taking advantage of favourable Empire tariffs.

MOHAN COMES TO CANADA

So Richard T. Mohan was sent to Canada in 1919 with a mandate to establish a processing facility to produce Douglas pectin and to market the product to Canadian jam and jelly makers.

He chose Cobourg for a number of reasons. It was in the heart of the apple growing country along the north shore of Lake Ontario from Bowmanville to Trenton. Secondly, there was a vacant munitions plant building - the Crossen Car Works - and thirdly, a regular ferry service operated the 70 miles across Lake Ontario to Rochester. In addition, Mohan found Cobourg an attractive town with a good labour force and all the needed amenities of school, church, and hospital.

On acquiring the old munitions plant on Ontario Street in Cobourg, just north of the CNR tracks, Mohan proceeded to establish facilities to make pectin. It was indeed a fascinating process, requiring expertise in biology, biochemistry and engineering and high standards of quality and process control.

COBOURG PECTIN PROCESS

Initially, the raw material was apples. From September to December, long lines of farmers' wagons and trucks would be lined up on Ontario Street waiting to be weighed and delivered to storage bins.

The first step in the process involved the crushing and pressing of the apples. The juice was made into vinegar which was sold. The pulp was cooked with a dilute organic acid. The resulting liquid pectin solution was separated from the waste material known as pomace. The dilute pectin was filtered, clarified by enzymes, brightened with carbon black, concentrated by evaporation, standardized, and barrelled for sale.

The waste pomace residue was trucked to the north end of the property to what was a large scale compost operation.

A minor by-product was apple syrup, made by concentrating waste apple sugars, and sold to the tobacco industry.

Given the technical nature of the process, it was clear that Mohan needed help to provide process and quality control for this operation. He found the help he needed in a young man he had met at Duffy-Mott. His name was Dick Parker, a chemist with this apple processor.

R.G. PARKER COMES TO COBOURG

On June 5, 1919, Dick had his first trip to Cobourg to plan laboratory requirements. He was back permanently on September 5th, just three months later.

So the Canadian operations of the Douglas Packing Company were established in Cobourg in 1919 and Douglas Concentrated Fruit Pectin was introduced to jam and jelly manufacturers in Canada and England. The little building with the rather pretentious columns on Ontario Street just north of the railway tracks was the company office. The long building running northward and adjacent buildings housed the process operations and the warehousing of barrelled pectin.

A new business has come to Cobourg!

CERTO INTRODUCED

In 1923, pectin was introduced to the retail market. As in the USA, the name of the product was Certo. It was sold in a brown bottle because it was believed light would diminish its strength. The bottle had a half full/half empty mark since some recipes required only half a bottle of Certo. The bottle had a recess covering about a third of its circumference where the recipe booklet was positioned - most of the time - under the label.

In the fruit season, it was not unusual for many of the staff at Cobourg to be involved in promoting the benefits of using Certo and in giving demonstrations wherever possible - stores, church basements, women's groups, and so on.

To assist the housewife who was experiencing difficulties with her jams or jellies, a fictitious lady called Jane Taylor Allen was invented. She was actually one of the chemists. "He" would reply to requests for help that would enable the housewife to correct the failure. If this didn't do the job, "he" would obtain a small sample of the failure. If analysis showed the jam or jelly to be, for example, low in acidity or in sugar content, the proper adjustment would be made and the sample re-boiled. Great was the satisfaction and surprise, when the sample was returned, now a proper jell set, with instructions to enable her to do likewise.

It took quite a bit of training to teach the Certo user that the recipes were really formulae that should be followed exactly for best results. It was not unusual to receive letters that said "I followed the recipe exactly except my husband doesn't like jam too sweet, so I left out a cup of sugar. Why didn't it jell?"

So the Douglas Pectin Limited business was established in Canada at Cobourg almost 75 years ago.

C.W. POST BUSINESS STARTS

At about the same time, other small food processing companies in the US were developing new businesses based on new products, the results of innovative thinking and a keen business sense that recognized market opportunities.

One such company, the Postum Cereal Company, was established in Battle Creek, Michigan in 1896 by Charles William Post. C.W. Post was an inventor who conceived the idea of making a nourishing and wholesome cereal beverage. On a farm on the outskirts of Battle Creek, Post experimented for two years with various combinations of grains. Finally, on New Year's Day 1895, Mr. Post made the first Postum Cereal Beverage for sale.

As the business grew, Post discovered that sales hit a peak in winter but slackened off in summer. So Post decided to make another cereal product that would sell well in summer. For many years he had prepared a cereal food for his own use. Made from wheat and malted barley, he baked his product in the form of breadsticks. This gave him an idea for a new product. After years of study, research and testing, he put his new cereal on the market in late 1897. He called it Grape-Nuts because it had a nutty flavour and because he believed grape sugar was formed during the baking.

Grape-Nuts was one of the first ready-to-eat cold cereals ever. Other products followed. In 1904, a cornflake was introduced. Post wanted to call it "Elijah's Manna". A devout man himself, he was puzzled when objections were made to the name and when the English Government refused to register the trademark. So in 1907, he rechristened the product "Post Toasties". Other cereal products came along and the business grew. Overseas businesses were set up and in 1908 a plant was built at Windsor, Ontario to make Grape-Nuts breakfast cereals. This was 10 or 11 years before Douglas Pectin was first made in Cobourg.

The C.W. Post management group at the Postum Cereal Company at Battle Creek were men of vision. While introducing new cereal products and expanding production capacity in the USA, Canada and abroad, they decided to expand and broaden their business base and grow through a program of mergers and acquisitions. Beginning in 1925, the Postum Cereal Company acquired the Genesee Pure Food Company, Walter Baker and Company and Franklin Baker Limited in 1927, the Cheek-Neal Company, makers of Maxwell House coffee, in 1928, and the Douglas Packing Company in 1929.

In 1929, the Postum company was reorganized and renamed General Foods Corporation in the USA. In Canada, it became General Foods Limited. Canadian subsidiaries of the companies GFC had acquired continued under decentralized management, each reporting to the USA head office.

In 1939, the Montreal operations Walter Baker and Company, Franklin Baker Limited, Maxwell House, Minute Tapioca, and Jello were combined under a single management, General Foods Limited. By 1945, Douglas Pectin Limited at Cobourg and the Windsor operations of the Canadian Postum Cereal Company were consolidated within General Foods Limited.

The benefits of this consolidation were, broadly speaking, three. First, it was seen that a variety of products with varying seasonal demands would help to level out seasonal peaks and valleys in production and distribution. Second, the increased size and diversity of the product line would result in savings in administration, purchasing, production, and transportation. Third, the synergy of experience, technology, and management would help to preserve the progressive pioneering spirit associated with the company.

ADVERTISING DEPARTMENT

Meanwhile, General Foods Limited in Cobourg, formerly Douglas Pectin Limited, continued to grow as the only manufacturer of fruit pectin in Canada and the Empire. In addition to these markets for bulk pectin, since 1923 Certo was bottled for sale to Canadian and British housewives.

During these early years, an advertising department was set up at Cobourg. Its function was the distribution of advertising material to GF salesmen and consumers all across Canada. This role underwent change and growth as GF's Canadian business expanded.

The marketing plans for many products involved redemption of coupons or requests for recipe books or a variety of premiums such as knife sets, or moulds or scoops or children's toys. Many of these "deals" required payment - 25 cents or 50 cents or even a dollar.

The volumes handled sometimes reached what seemed to be staggering proportions - accounting for money in and merchandise out, to say nothing of stamps. The department's staff reached 50 or 60. Truckloads of mail went to the post office on many days.

It was said that as far as incoming mail was concerned, it would make sense for the Cobourg postmaster to direct all that mail to GF and after GF's mail was sorted out, the rest could go back to the town.

MANAGEMENT CHANGES

There were changes of significance to the management of Douglas Pectin Limited and subsequently to General Foods Limited. R.T. Mohan was from the beginning Managing Director of Douglas Pectin Limited. He was also Director of Douglas Pectin Limited of London, England, and of the Grape Nuts Company of London, England.

"R.T." was appointed President of General Foods Limited in 1938 and moved to the GFL headquarters in Toronto. He was succeeded as Plant Manager by A. Dudley Spragge. On Mr. Spragge's retirement in 1948, R.G. Parker became Plant Manager, a post he held until his retirement in 1962. He was followed as Plant Manager by H.C. Gibson who served in that role for 11 years of dramatic growth.

GAINES BACKGROUND

The first tentative step of growth at Cobourg took place in 1945. Actually, it began in 1928 in Sherburne, NY with a miller named Clarence Gaines. His business was milling and his hobby breeding Pointers. He had a theory that feeding was as important as a dog's pedigree and that a dog's food should fulfill all the nutritional needs of a dog's system.

After extensive experiments, Gaines developed a balanced food that provided all the ingredients essential for a dog's well being. He tried this on his Pointers. The dogs responded magnificently.

Soon afterwards, other dog owners, impressed with this success, began coming to him for information and samples. This ever widening circle of dog owners became so large it was necessary to put the product on a commercial basis and to build a new plant. Soon the new plant had to be enlarged and then enlarged again. In 1939, the milling of flour was abandoned in favour of dog food. In 1943, the Gaines Food Company became part of GF. In 1944, the Gaines Research Kennels were established which soon became famous for their work on product improvement and dog owner education.

Clarence Gaines had created a new business.

GAINES COMES TO COBOURG

In 1945, a small production operation was installed in Cobourg to make and pack Gaines Meal and Krunchon. This installation simply mixed various dry ingredients to produce a balanced dog food that ensured the correct levels of proteins, fats, carbohydrates, vitamins, and minerals. The finished dog food was packed in bags of various sizes. This new business created between 10 and 20 new jobs.

By 1952, employment had increased to about 80, with most of the new jobs in the pet food operation. From this modest beginning, the business grew rapidly as new products and packs were added to the Gaines line-up. This necessitated a series of plant expansions for increased capacity and the introduction of new pet food products. In 1974, a large and costly state-of-the-art plant was built to process and package soft moist pet foods, Gainesburgers and Top Choice. There were high technology products, the so-called canned dog foods without the can. They required especially sophisticated manufacturing procedures and controls.

NEXT COMES KOOL-AID

In 1954, a Kool-Aid production facility was established in Cobourg. Kool-Aid had been introduced in the US by the Perkins Products Company. It quickly became a favourite in both the US and Canada. The original product, in many flavours, was a pleasant beverage that was sweetened to taste by the consumer. It was both refreshing and economical. It was also produced in a sweetened format that only required the addition of water - the ultimate convenience product. By this time, 1955, the Cobourg site now employed some 200 people.

AND NOW JELL-O

The next expansion at Cobourg had its beginnings in the USA some 60 years earlier. While the first patent for a gelatin dessert was issued to a Peter Cooper in 1845 - 150 years ago - nothing was done to use the idea for 50 years. But in 1895, a manufacturer of cough medicines in LeRoy, NY, one Pearl B. Wait decided to enter the new packaged food business and came up with an adaption of the original patent. His wife, May Davis Wait, coined the name Jell-O. Production began in 1897.

Initially Jell-O sales did not set any records. Two years later, Pearl Wait sold out to a neighbour - Orator Francis Woodward - for \$450.00. Woodward was an interesting guy. He founded the Genesee Pure Food Company to manufacture a cereal beverage he called Grain-O. He had little success with the new Jell-O product. In fact, on one occasion, he tried to sell the business to his superintendent, A.S. Nico, for \$35.00. And Nico turned him down!

Nico's rejection of Woodward's offer to sell the business gave him a second chance. In the early years of the new century, sales took off and Woodward had reason to be happy at the rejection of his offer to sell. Woodward launched his first Jell-O advertising campaign in 1902 and then the Jell-O "best-seller" recipe books by the millions.

In 1906, the Genesee Pure Food Company of Canada first produced Jell-O dessert products at Bridgeburg (now renamed Fort Erie), Ontario. In 1930, Jell-O operations were transferred to Montreal.

RESEARCH AT COBOURG

In 1954, a modest research department was established on the Cobourg site. This was a small department mostly concerned with adapting products introduced in the USA to the Canadian market and providing technical assistance to Cobourg manufacturing operations.

Over the years, the scope and variety of the demands on research increased reflecting work on new products, new packaging, quality improvements, cost reduction, and applied technology. As the department grew, its facilities became inadequate. Finally in 1967, a state-of-the-art research building was constructed on the William Street side of the site and furnished with the latest in scientific equipment for food research for the staff of 75. The combined research staff at Cobourg and Montreal made GF research facilities one of the largest non-government food research laboratories in Canada.

JELL-O COMES TO COBOURG

In 1955, a business decision was made to relocate the Jell-O operation from Montreal to Cobourg. New facilities were planned for processing, packaging, warehousing, and people. This entailed construction of a large modern building, the first at Cobourg, and a sharp contrast to the old munitions plant that housed pectin and pet food production facilities.

A number of supervisory, technical, and production workers were transferred from Montreal to Cobourg, and in 1956, Jell-O production commenced at Cobourg. It was highly significant for both people and General Foods and for the town of Cobourg. It was the first expansion of any size and marked the beginning of a growth trend that continued for two decades.

Cobourg was on the move.

There were major capital projects every year. Some involved equipment, some new buildings. Some were concerned with new products or line extensions or capacity increases. Others related to process improvements or cost reduction. Many gave rise to new jobs. Most of the new products proved successful. Some were not and were withdrawn from the market.

WINDSOR MOVE

In 1963, as part of GF's manufacturing strategy, the Windsor plant was shut down and cereal and rice operations moved to a new building constructed on the Cobourg site. This was an uniquely designed building with equipment for the production of Post cereals and Minute Rice and entailed demanding and complex food technology expertise. Other projects concerned construction of a new office building, a new large finished goods warehouse, and a services building for maintenance shops, stores, and employee cafeteria. This was indeed a challenging time for Cobourg management.

But the pace of change and growth continued - change brought about by new technologies and growth through more new products.

TANG BEVERAGES

The first major new products were Tang and Awake beverages introduced in 1964. Awake was not a great success. But Tang, invented here by a Cobourg research team, was a winner. Employment on the Cobourg site now totalled 450.

Consumer demand for Tang beverages was so strong that for years the product was in short supply. Tang was an excellent synthetic fruit juice - man made if you will - available in a number of flavours and simple to use. The packing of a pre-measured quantity in a pouch helped to make reconstitution simple. It was thus always available in the fridge and was often thought of as orange juice. So year after year, buildings were expanded and mixing and packaging facilities enlarged to keep up with the demand for Tang beverages.

But Tang wasn't the only product that grew. There were new Post cereals, new Gaines pet foods, new Jell-O desserts, and new beverage products. Cool Whip frozen topping, and Shake 'n Bake coating mixes were introduced and the required facilities were installed. In addition, support departments were expanded - laboratories, maintenance shops, and employee services.

Not all products were accepted by the marketplace. Some are perhaps best forgotten - Calumet Baking Powder, Swans Down Flour, Satina and LaFrance laundry aids, Awake, Start and After Five Cocktail Mixes, Cornfetti cereal by Post, and so on.

DIMENSIONS OF GROWTH

In 1972, employment at GF in Cobourg exceeded one thousand. In 1945, it was 40 - 50. In 1972, the site covered 50,400 sq.m., almost 5.6 hectares. In 1945, it was 5,760 sq.m. In just 17 years, employment increased over twenty times and buildings by almost ten times.

This growth in GF's Cobourg operation was, of course, the result of efforts of many departments - Market Research, Marketing, Sales, Research, and Engineering. Still, it was the Cobourg plant people who staffed and operated the ever changing and expanding production facilities to make available an incredible variety of quality products for the market place in the required quantity at the right time and at the right cost. It was no simple responsibility.

Back in 1945, almost 50 years ago, Cobourg was a little town of 6,000 people. There was no mail delivery, no shopping malls, no east end school, no attractive harbour and no yacht club, just huge piles of coal and plenty of coal dust when the wind blew.

And Douglas Pectin Limited was just a little business.

But in both the town and the business, there were seeds of growth. As GF grew so did the needs for housing, roads, water, sewage, electrical services, churches, schools, medical facilities, and recreational and cultural amenities. Thus did Cobourg mature as these needs were met.

COMMUNITY SERVICES

One thing seems clear. Many of the social services which developed in Cobourg owed their existence to the many volunteers who gave their time and talent to make Cobourg the attractive town it is. No where is this more evident than in the commitment of the Cobourg people of General Foods who played a leadership role in the many community projects that were always ongoing. And it was each successive plant manager who set the example.

It all started back in the days of R.T. Mohan. Mr. Mohan's great interest was St. Andrew's Church. Following destruction of the church by fire in January 1937, he was the moving spirit in its rebuilding by December of the same year, serving as chairman of the building committee. In the years after leaving Cobourg in 1938, he remained as a trustee and continued his contributions to the church. One of his other interests in Cobourg was the General Hospital where he served on the board for many years, serving as an example to other managers who followed him.

During the war, Mr. Mohan held two important posts. He was the Administrator for tea and coffee for the Wartime Prices and Trade Board. He was also President of the Wartime Food Corporation. In recognition of these services to Canada, he was made a Commander of the British Empire.

On Mr. Mohan's move to Toronto in 1938, Dudley Spragge succeeded him as plant manager. He was recognized as a leading industrial figure in Cobourg, and he played an active part in the community. He served as Vice President of the Hospital Board. He was also a trustee of Cobourg Collegiate, President of the Rotary Club, and Chairman of the local Boy Scout Troop.

In 1948, Mr. Spragge retired and was succeeded by R.G. Parker. Until this time, the Cobourg plant was a small operation. The only new development since 1919 was the very modest pet food installation in 1945. By the time of Dick's retirement in 1962, Cobourg's growth was in high gear. Thanks to new facilities for pet foods, the move of Jell-O from Montreal, and establishment of the Research Department, employment was now over 250 on the site.

Dick Parker was a loyal supporter of Cobourg community affairs. His two great interests were the Cobourg General Hospital where he served for many years as Chairman of the Board and the Cobourg Golf Club, his recreational love.

On Dick's retirement in 1962, H.C. "Hoot" Gibson became plant manager. During the next eleven years of Hoot's tenure, the Cobourg plant experienced its period of greatest growth - projects for new products, new facilities, and new buildings followed each other at a dizzying rate. His was indeed a very challenging assignment.

Hoot continued the custom shown by his predecessors of supporting the community by playing a leadership role in many local activities. This included involvement in the Chamber of Commerce, United Appeal, the Board of the Hospital, the Rotary Club, Junior Achievement, the Board of Sir Sandford Fleming Community College, and the Cobourg Golf Club, to name just a few of Hoot's interests.

By the time of Hoot's move to Toronto in 1973 to head office, employment at the site exceeded one thousand. GF was now a major force in the community and the impact of GF and GF employees and their families on the town was not insignificant. GF people were active in most facets of the community life. They were showing leadership in a wide variety of roles in politics, service clubs, business organizations, sports, social services, and cultural endeavours. GF people both contributed to and benefitted from a multitude of activities that enriched the community.

During the time of Mohan, Spragge, Parker, and Gibson, the Cobourg plant experienced phenomenal growth. So did the town of Cobourg. The town doubled in population and surrounding communities brought the total to about 20,000 in this period.

Changes continued after Hoot's move to Toronto but at a different pace and in a different style. The changes after 1973 represent a new chapter in the history of General Foods in Cobourg. This then may be a good place to stop, after one thought I want to leave with you.

The growth of GF in Cobourg from a tiny one product business to the major industrial facility it is today, reflects the philosophy of the far-sighted men who created General Foods in 1929. These men were giants of industry. They brought together literally dozens of small food businesses into a corporate enterprise that was a leader in many respects - sustained growth, dependable quality products, financial performance, open management style, and employee relations far ahead of current business practices. Somehow they melded together all these diverse businesses with different backgrounds and histories. They established a General Foods culture that earned the success we have seen and won the respect and admiration, yes, and envy too, of people in many walks of life.

The founders of General Foods spoke of the General Foods family, the family of GF products and the family of GF people. The early GF Employee Relations Principles clearly established this family concept. A little GF Personnel Booklet in 1937 - getting on for 60 years ago - said it this way on employee relations:

“We want this business to be conducted in an efficient manner and in a spirit of friendliness, to the mutual advantage of employees, management, stockholders and consumers”

Naive? Impractical? Impossible?

I don't think so.

RECONSTRUCTING THE PAST WITH MATERIAL CULTURE BY CATH OBERHOLTZER

History is all the ways we encode the past in symbol form to make a present ... (recorded in) texts written down, texts spoken, texts caught in the forms of material things. Greg Dening.

For the most part, when we think of history, we think of written documents. However, in reconstructing the past of native North Americans (and other 'preliterate' societies), our primary documents are most often the objects that they have produced. As early records - in the form of what anthropologists call 'Material Culture' - exist in an uneven distribution, extant objects must be augmented with native oral tradition as well as written evidence and archival photographs from European sources.

My area of interest focuses primarily on the East Cree¹ of the James Bay region. The recorded history for this area began with the arrival of Henry Hudson in 1611 and continued sporadically until the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) established a permanent trading post at the mouth of the Rupert River in 1668. During the early fur trade history, European activity in the James and Hudson's Bay region involved English and French traders, adventurers, missionaries and officials of the British government. As souvenirs of their travels in this new land, these people collected native artifacts to send home as gifts as well as for their own "Cabinets of Curiosities". Eventually, the greater portion of these early acquisitions of Cree material found its way into museums and private collections throughout Europe.

It is at this point in the history of the East Cree that I began my research. Initially, my husband and I spent four months examining and photographing items in 45 of the European collections. As catalogue documentation for the pieces is often minimal - when it exists at all - the task was at times formidable. The second stage of my research involved selecting photographs of about 100 items - some well-documented, others with no documentation but recognizable as Cree, and some enigmatic pieces bearing no information or visual clues - to take with us to Cree communities on the west and east coasts of James Bay. These photographs were used to elicit comments from elders and other community members about the portrayed objects in particular and memories about their past in general. These comments and memories, in conjunction with the evidence provided by written sources and archival imagery, were included in the historical reconstruction.

¹ The Cree of James Bay are also known as East Main Cree, James Bay Cree, Swampy Cree, Mushkegowuk, and on the east coast, most often as Montagnais-Naskapi.

A preliminary reconstruction of Cree history demonstrates that the objects document not only the presence of Europeans through the incorporation of new trade materials but also the retention of native technology and native world view (that is, how they perceive the world around them). Through this material culture we have tangible evidence of Cree cosmology; their symbol system; their concept of a community that comprises animal-persons, human-persons and non-human persons (what we might term the supernatural); their complementary approach to survival in which men and women, young and old, animals and humans, humans and non-humans function together to survive; and above all, the connectedness of all tangible and intangible elements of their world.

The first group of slides shown illustrates the transition through time from the earliest and entirely indigenous artifacts to those exhibiting European material and influences. The first pieces of armbands, belt and neck ornament - fashioned from fibre twine, narrow strips of caribou hide, birch bark, porcupine quills and local pigments - were collected at Rupert's House or Moose Factory on one of the English voyages to Hudson Bay sometime between 1662 and 1676².

Continued use of local materials and designs is noted in the thirty precisely nested birch bark baskets collected in the area prior to 1753. A century later, comparable baskets were deemed as an appropriate reflection of native art for presentation to Lord Elgin. The persistence of traditional materials as expressions of "Indian-ness" to the outside world is balanced by the incorporation of European trade goods which appear first as minor additions to items otherwise created from native materials, imagery, technology, and made to function within the Cree culture. For example, early examples of hide pouches decorated with porcupine quill work are finished with straps of silk cord. Painted hide coats, echoing European styles, continued to use native materials, motifs and techniques. Similarly, hide mittens beautifully embroidered with floral motifs proficiently worked in silk floss reveal European influences in material and imagery. Eventually, native producers altered all these items, and the ubiquitous moccasins as well, to suit the needs and tastes of the nineteenth century tourists.

Exquisite rectangular hoods of European trade cloth and beads with multicoloured floral designs cascading down either side of the wearer's face, evoke innumerable questions about their history and presence in Cree culture. When were they worn? By whom? What function did they serve? Acknowledging that cloth and beads were desirable trade goods, were ready-made floral hoods also introduced by Europeans? If not, who taught the women how to do beadwork? Are the floral patterns indigenous? And so on.

Disparate information suggests that decorated hoods had a lengthy pre-contact development. Beginning with archaeological evidence, a 2000 year old burial of a female

² The pieces, recorded in Canon John Bargrave's catalogue of 1676, are now housed in The Precincts, Canterbury Cathedral, England

interred wearing a pointed hood trimmed along the edges of the face with two rows of very tiny shells perforated and strung on sinew, documents a pre-historical practice of using “beads” as decorative material on a pointed form. Later, images illustrated in pictographs (painted on rock, bark, or wood) and petroglyphs (carved into rock) reinforce the traditional use of pointed head-gear before the European presence in the New World. After the arrival of the Europeans, tidbits of information can be extracted from the journals and reports of missionaries and Hudson’s Bay Company employees. This knowledge, augmented by archival images, allows historical insights into the development of the beaded hoods. Written descriptions begin with British seaman Thomas Gorst in 1670, who wrote that the hoods of caribou skin worn by Cree women at Rupert’s River looked “somewhat like a Monkshood.” Further descriptions recording cloth hoods for both men and women begin in the mid-1700s. These, too, were of rectangular form with a peak and tassel, and sometimes likened to a pillowcase with one side left open. Decorative elements of naturalistic animals, birds and geometric shapes were rendered in beads, porcupine quills and feathers. Only after the beginning of the 1800s did the floral patterns become evident.

In addition to a few extant hoods, a number of early images depicting hoods further document their development during the early part of the 19th century. For example, a watercolour painted by Williams Richards, a Cree of mixed ancestry, dating between 1805 and 1811, depicts a woman from the Moose Factory wearing a beaded hood. Similarly, Peter Rindisbacher, a young Swiss artist working in the 1820s, recorded a number of Cree examples in the vicinity of York Factory. Dolls dating from the period between 1790 and 1810 and dressed in accurately detailed traditional clothing confirm the use of beaded hoods. However, several full size hoods from the very early 1800s were decorated with geometric designs rendered in appliquéd ribbonwork and/or beads. Floral beadwork either replaced or complemented these geometric expressions, and as the flowered hoods gained in popularity, we begin to question how and why this imagery became important.

Over the years, many scholars have assumed that the floral motifs were taught to young native girls by European nuns. In the James Bay area, however, the earliest non-native woman arrived in 1840 accompanying her missionary husband. As the evidence available suggests that floral beadwork had already flourished in this area by that time, this leaves us with a controversy arising over the origins of floral motifs and instruction in their implementation.

Examination of the hoods reveals that while the materials are European, construction and decorative techniques are still native; that is, the beads are strung on sinew and then stitched to the cloth in the same manner as porcupine quills would have been. Those with floral patterns all have roses, rosebuds, tiny paired rose leaves and/or prickly stems in combination with other flower-like motifs. Comparative observations between these floral masterpieces and the kaleidoscope of colour bursting forth during the warm summer months of the James Bay Lowlands, suggest that the hoods can be viewed as floral landscapes. While this may indeed be part of the meaning behind the adoption of floral

leggings. As a man matures and becomes more proficient, an increased elaboration of beadwork on his hunting gear attests to his prowess as a hunter and provider, a prestigious position in this hunting society. Just as the man's appearance must please the caribou, so must his wife's. Furthermore, her complementary role as a hunter's wife requires expertise in the making and decorating of her husband's garments. Her skill in pleasing the caribou with her workmanship and artistic ability is reflected in turn by the success of her husband's hunting. Together, they survive.

The magnificence of these decorated items is balanced by the simplicity of baby charms, tiny (6 to 9 cm. in diameter) willow hoops filled with netted sinew or thread similar to a spider web in appearance³. Hung from the hoops of cradle boards or attached to babies' moss bags, their size and appearance belies their significance in Cree society. Functioning to protect the baby from evil (illness or bad spirits), the cradle charms act as a metaphor for both protection and provision. By snaring forces detrimental to the health and well-being of the infant, these charms enable the child to grow into a productive adult. These charms in turn refer to a more complex pattern of protection and provision which encompasses fishing, hunting and trapping technology and production. By figuratively untangling the finished net, the symbolic referents of lines and knots are also revealed.

Lines, both tangible and intangible, express a theme of connectedness in Cree culture. Seen as a thread that stitches separate pieces together or the umbilical cord that physically connects the infant to the mother, lines bridge time and space to connect generations and kin groups spread across the land. Lines occur as a dominant motif in Cree mythology and appear in material culture as hunters' cords for carrying game, as nets for catching fish, and as the supportive webbing of snowshoes. It is the women that transform or manipulate the lines in sewing, in snowshoe netting, in fish nets, in lacing infants into moss bags and onto cradle boards, in braiding hunters' game cords, and so on.

The manipulation of lines into concrete forms exemplifies the underlying potency of complementary roles required for survival in an unrelenting environment. The underlying premise of this concept is revealed in the manufacture of snowshoes. The wooden frames are meticulously carved and formed by the man with the supportive netting completed by the woman. Together they produce an efficacious means of winter transportation, one that protects the wearer from negative forces, allows them to acquire essential provisions, and maintains social networks. This concept of complementary roles, of working together as a means for survival, became a critical factor for Cree success in their relationships with the Europeans.

³North of the community of Eastmain on the east coast of James Bay, these circular cradle charms are replaced with miniature fish nets tied around an infant's throat. The function and symbolism are synonymous for both forms.

Through these few examples, we can begin to appreciate the ways in which material culture makes tangible the very essence of Cree character and world view. Moreover, material culture allows us, as outsiders, to reconstruct aspects of their social history. These objects are indeed the embodiment of the past; many of the experiences and symbolic means of the traditional culture have been encoded and encapsulated for present generations. The history of individual and group choices, internal and external influences, environment and environmental changes, and, above all, cultural continuity are all reflected in material objects.

**‘SO MUCH STILL TO DO’
BY DR. MICHAEL PETERMAN**

As several among you will know, I have been working on the Strickland sisters -- that is, the Canadian Strickland sisters, Susanna Moodie and Catharine Parr Traill -- for a long time. I began that work naively in 1978, thinking I would try to prepare a complete bibliography of what these two women wrote during their lifetimes. I hope it does not make you think I am a procrastinator when I tell you that my initial project, the bibliography, remains incomplete 17 years later.

The truth is, bibliographies are just lists, and lists in themselves are boring. Far more interesting are LIVES -- in this case lives lived at the cutting edge of the making of English Canada, at the cutting edge of the making of our extraordinary world, lives lived in a century that seems so distant from us now but lives lived in this very place we call home -- and I mean here, the Cobourg/Belleville/Peterborough triangle. Though I am a student of literature and thus very interested in literary texts, I must confess to a professional and personal fascination with the lives of Canadian writers and particularly, with the relation between the life as lived and the literary act of making a poem or a play or a novel. Hence, I have been as happy as a bear in honey, as a dog with a bone, in having had the opportunity to work during these years on the lives and letters of Moodie and Traill. That work is almost over now, and I can't help feeling the impending loss -- loss of purpose, loss of commitment, loss of a curious kind of intimacy, with these two women whom I can hardly imagine knowing in a personal way. Indeed, I suspect that, having as they did a touch of aloofness and snobbery, they might not give me the time of day were I somehow to show up at their doorstep. But then again, since I can claim to be a professor, they might be just a little impressed and at least offer me a moment's grace and a cup of tea -- certainly nothing stronger.

Before I share with you some thoughts on Catharine Parr Traill and some special glimpses from her letters, I ask that you bear with me while I talk a bit about beginnings and ends. This will allow me to share with you something of my excitement for this work I have been engaged in.

First, beginnings. This whole project began for me in the Metro Central Library in Toronto one day in 1978 when I was on my first sabbatical and living in Toronto. I was tracking down some Moodie poems that I knew were in a newspaper called *The New York Albion* when I came across not only the two poems in question but a letter Moodie had written to the Editor describing the poems as "*the first flight of my muse on Canadian Shores*". Then she added, in what can be seen as an acutely accurate observation about the problems facing the artist in Canada in that century, "*but his chilly atmosphere, at present, is little favourable to the spirit of Poesy. The minds of the inhabitants being too much engrossed, in providing for their families the necessaries of life, to pay much attention to the cultivation*

of literature. However, mortifying to the vanity of an Author, this indifference may be, it would be unjust to censure my fellow settlers for suffering more urgent and important duties to render them deaf to the voice of the siren, whose wild flights and vagaries have charmed me from my youth upwards". The letter was dated 14 February 1833 and it, of course, was written near Cobourg -- in one of those pig-styish cabins or hovels Susanna was forced to endure while the Moodies awaited the removal of Joe Harris and his family.

This moment is where all the rivers began for me. It was pure discovery, pure revelation -- a voice from the past directly to me, a voice with something to say, a voice that spoke of a time when, unlike today, literature in Canada was not valued, when the hard conditions dictating mere survival worked against the life and needs of the imagination. I hovered over that letter in that magnificent library and I began to wonder about Moodie and Traill, their lives and their letters. Suddenly, they were accessible to me at least as a project I could envision and dream about. Could there be many more such letters, public as this one was, or private? What could such letters tell us? Where would one begin to look? Could one find enough material to make a modest book? Well, the story that unfolds involves the formation of a research team; my esteemed colleagues, Carl Ballstadt from McMaster University and Beth Hopkins (York) joined me in the quest and the result is -- or will soon be -- 3 books -- ***Susanna Moodie: Letters of a Lifetime (1985)***; ***Susanna and John Moodie: Letters of Love and Duty (1993)***; and finally, the ***Selected Letters of Catharine Parr Traill***, which Carl, Beth and I hope to complete tomorrow and submit to the University of Toronto Press. There have been other related projects as well, scholarly editions of ***Roughing It in the Bush*** by Carl and ***The Backwoods of Canada*** which I am completing this Spring, numerous articles and the collection of Traill stories and sketches, ***Forest and Other Gleanings***, which Carl and I edited and which was published last November. None of these books is small and I can assure you they contain many surprises and much information.

I began with beginnings and the joys of **DISCOVERY**. Now a few words on the end, and the worth of **RECOVERY**. When you undertake such work (each book of letters takes about 6 years) you don't know how it will be received or whether it will be deemed a worthwhile contribution to Canadian knowledge and scholarship. You wonder in dark moments if you are, when all is said and done, simply wasting your time, like a farmer retilling a barren field. Hence, it is a blessed thing to receive good notices and to receive them from informed people with a wide range of expertise -- not merely literary types but historians, sociologists and anthropologists among others. Fortunately, both Moodie books have received considerable positive response (I'll spare you my quoting from them though it is hard to resist), and we hope the Traill letters will be warmly welcomed as well. I can tell you that ***Letters of Love and Duty*** has been chosen as one of the 10 best academic books of 1994 in the United States by **CHOICE**, the American Library Association Journal; and, as I hope you all know, it is far more readable and accessible than most academic books these days.

It is not easy to talk about ends. In many ways, the real satisfactions lie in making the document, in pulling together a lot of forgotten or overlooked data and in making it both coherent and accessible to general readers and scholars. But other qualities need emphasis. From such letters, we learn much more about the way in which ordinary people lived in Ontario in the 19th century, about the way they thought and the way they dealt with gains and losses, hope and despair, illness and pain, pregnancy and death. The American novelist, Sinclair Lewis, once observed that the most interesting thing about an individual is how he or she lived his 24 hours a day, how he put in time, how he made ends meet, how he dealt with the daily routine and struggle. When we think about that objective with regard to the 19th century in Canada, we realize that we don't really know much about such things; we may know about John A. Macdonald or Isaac Brock, but not much about the way individuals lived. However, through letters written over a lifetime by women who knew how to write and who valued the act of letter-writing, we can come much closer to that elusive set of awarenesses and better understand the struggles out of which our wonderful 20th century Canadian experience has been born.

When I contrast what Traill and Moodie went through as writers and cultural spokeswomen in the 1800s to our world of wonderful libraries, universities, our welfare system, the Canada Council, the fostering of world-class authors like Alice Munro, Robertson Davies, Margaret Atwood, and Timothy Findley (all from Ontario!), I am amazed by what those pioneers set in motion, what they saw as possible in the dim future. The letters of Moodie and Traill help to give us back our past, and whether we are local historians or academics, we can gain much from them. To borrow from the vocabulary of the modern literary world, I am delighted to have been a belated agent in furthering their fame. These days, every writer needs an agent.

Enough of beginnings and ends. Let's look to Traill's life and share some glimpses of her letters. In the process, let's do away with some unfortunate labelling that critics and commentators have attached to Traill over the years:

- Northrop Frye: an attitude to nature akin to that of Little Miss Muffett
- Marian Fowler: Mrs. Happy Homemaker
- Margaret Laurence: Saint Catharine (*The Diviners*)

Three opinions of readers of CPT letters (what was Vol. 1).

A quick sketch of Traill's life:

- 1802-1832 England (Suffolk)
- 1832-1839 The Backwoods
- 1839-1846 Peterborough (Otonabee Twp.)
- 1846-1857 Rice Lake (Oaklands)
- 1859-1899 Lakefield (Westove)

SOME FACTORS TO BEAR IN MIND REGARDING TRAILL'S LIFE

- ➔ Outliving 3 of her children, several of her grandchildren, all her own brothers and sisters, and most of her close friends.
- ➔ A long life of nurturing her friendships and connections (a kind, thoughtful, sensitive woman who was always careful not to say spiteful or critical things about others and who wanted as a writer, to be one whose work would be blameless in the eyes of her children).
- ➔ Living virtually all of the 19th century despite an array of illnesses that would stagger a gorilla (lumbago, gout, sciatica, neuralgia, rheumatism, for example) yet always rallying her body ("the crazy old machine" as she called it); as a pattern we see her often rising from a sick bed to travel to her children or in pursuit of publishing opportunities.
- ➔ Functioning as a productive writer virtually until the day of her death and despite many disappointments and instances of mistreatment by publishers; publishing her last two books in her nineties; even gaining a measure of fame in her later years as the oldest living author in the British Empire. Characterizing herself as "a quiet country mouse" and relishing "the even tenor" of her life in Lakefield, she was surprised to find herself subject to the attention and praise of Governor-Generals, Prime Ministers, and leading scientists. Hence, my title ***So Much Still to do***, for even in her last year, she was at work on manuscripts she hoped would benefit her family and Canada.
- ➔ Above all, her Christian faith and fatalism which so conditioned her thinking and allowed her to take in philosophical stride the many losses and disappointments and setbacks that characterized her long life. In a telling metaphor she called on often, God was the Great Physician; she always believed in a divine plan she could not even imagine and, as a result, her sense of self was at one with her sense of order in the universe.

Some examples/glimpses from the letters:

1. January 7, 1834 (a real backwoods letter) to James & Emma Bird.
2. April 14, 1846 (to Susanna) on verge of moving to Rice Lake.
3. [1851] to Frances Stewart - from Oaklands - sense of doom.
4. November 2, 1851 ps. to James' letter to his Aunt Susanna.
5. January 31, 1864 to FS - death of 1st grandson, Henry Arthur Strickland Atwood (1860 - 1864) buried at St. George's, Gores Landing.
6. February 3, 1884 - to Ellen Dunlop - re Ottawa society, Rideau Hall and her own fame - an unusually descriptive letter.

Let me end a passage quoted verbatim from the *Christian Guardian* (July 6, 1898). The article was entitled "The Oldest Living British Author" and it read:

Sir Sandford Fleming and a committee of ladies have started a movement to make known [Catharine Parr Traill's] literary merits. The history of her life, her fight with poverty, her study of plant and animal life, and her writings, make a truly heroic record.

Let Canada's sons and daughters unite to make the sunset of this noble woman's life bright and peaceful, for she was a true friend of her adopted country. Let it not be said of us that we allow true merit to die in obscurity, while selfish greed sits amid plenty and in prominence.

With apologies for that Methodist sting at the end of the homily, we are reminded that in Catharine Parr Traill there was a remarkable, productive, humble, but thoughtful and heroic life, one waged against poverty, bad luck, and seemingly relentless problems and setbacks. She deserves a fuller reading and a richer understanding, and it is my hope that these various books will help in the process of recognizing her.

EARLY CANADIAN GARDENS
(A PRECIS OF THE ILLUSTRATED LECTURE GIVEN APRIL 25, 1995)
BY HELEN SKINNER

Although the title says *Early Canadian Gardens*, the information for the research, while culled from both Federal and Ontario archives, was found to be more plentiful for Upper Canada rather than for Lower Canada or the West and has provided the major source of material for this paper.

There were many references to the garden and to plants* in the garden but there is little detailed information that would excite botanical horticulturists. Most references from letters and diaries are of a general nature. For example, Mrs. Simcoe wrote about Sweetbrier and did not call the plant by its botanical name *Rose Eglantheria*. Little has changed in two hundred years. Most gardeners today, unless they are keen horticulturists writing to other enthusiasts, write about the success of their Shasta daisies, Corn flowers and Pinks, not their *Chrysanthemum Xsuperbums*, *Centaurea Cyranus* and *Dianthus*.

Similarly, seed companies which advertised their products in newspapers and farm publications in the early days also listed common names and rarely botanical unless, like delphiniums and crocus, the botanical was the common name. Variety differences were given by colour, i.e. Hyacinth - blue, pink or white. It was not until the latter years of the 19th century when, in more detailed catalogues or the first Canadian gardening book by D.E. Beadle, botanical nomenclature was used and varieties named.

The result for the garden researcher is long lists of plants that were grown in early gardens in this country but almost no specific varieties. This means that no restored garden can be truly authentic, it can only be appropriate. Even if specific varieties were known, plants change with the years, with soil changes and with increases and decreases in light. While it may be possible to restore a historic house with some semblance of authenticity, it is never possible to reproduce the plants of an original garden.

Garden designs of early settlers also lack precise details. Early writings and sketches show designs of early gardens and from these some general conclusions may be drawn. However, it must be noted that generalities are generalities. The summations on design which follow, by no means represent the style of every garden any more than 20th century observations about perennial borders and evergreen foundation plantings are true of every garden today. With these caveats in mind, it is to be hoped that historians will find the following observations on gardening in the days of early settlement of this country of interest.

Early settlers wrote about the bulbs they planted - crocus, narcissus and tulips. They talked about geraniums on windowsills, especially when it was cold enough outside to freeze the plants inside. They wrote about hyacinths blooming in water glasses thus

encouraging hopes of spring. Seeds of many annuals including petunias (blue and white only in that period), marigolds, annual asters, and corn flowers were planted. Annuals that provided good seed were popular, and seed was traded and given away, especially in the country where stores were few and far between and money for non-essential flowers was scarce.

Herbs were popular for they provided flavourings, perfumes and insecticides, and home remedies. Settlers' letters home frequently asked for herb seeds both annual and, more difficult to find, perennial plants like lavender.

Seed, bulbs and "roots" were sent out from Europe and, although a reference such as Mary O'Brien's "... *the roots arrived, some alive, some dead...*" leaves much to be desired, there are references to roses, peony and daylily roots packed in moss that survived their 5 - 6 week crossing of the Atlantic.

Toward the mid 19th century and later, seedhouses and nurseries in Canada had good supplies of bulbs, seeds and plants grown here or imported from Europe and the U.S.

As for garden design, for the earliest pioneers, the vegetable garden was *the* garden. Flowers, if they were grown, were in the "flower garden". Vegetables and small fruits were given the sunniest, most fertile, and most sheltered position. Corn, beans, pumpkins, potatoes, *pease*, and cucumbers were early crops. Pioneers learned from the native people to plant corn, beans, and pumpkins together. The corn provided a stalk for the beans to climb and the roots of both were kept cool and shaded by the huge leaves of the pumpkin. Then, when corn and beans were harvested, the sun shone past their decimated foliage to ripen the pumpkins beneath. Little did they know that the combination was one which would replenish the soil as the plants grew and ripened.

Small fruits, raspberries, currants and gooseberries were important and apples, pears, cherries and plums dominated early orchards. Grafting was very popular and there were literally hundreds of apple varieties most of which have completely disappeared.

Fences were the hard features of early gardens. They protected the garden produce. They kept the domestic animals in and attempted to keep the wild creatures out. They came in many shapes and materials. Rocks, stones, stumps, and rails were used to outline the property while pickets often surrounded the house and gardens of more comfortable settlers.

Once porches or stoops were added to houses, and this was as soon as possible, vines quickly followed. Native Virginia creeper (*Parthenocissus quinquefolia*) or Canadian ivy as it was called, native autumn clematis (*clematis virginiana*), hops (*humulus*), morning glory (*ipomoea*), and scarlet runners (*phaseolus coccineus*) were popular. They were not only ornamental but also provided shade and, in the case of hops and scarlet runners, useful additions to the larder.

Ornamental shrubs were planted close to doorways, at the corner of the house or along the fenceline where they would not interfere when the grass was scythed. Favourites were the familiar and fragrant honeysuckle (*Lonicera*), lilac, mock orange (*Philadelphus*), "the snowball" (*Viburnum opulus*) and shrub roses. Occasionally, a specimen shrub might be planted in the middle of the lawn.

Trees, once all the original ones had been cleared from the land, were planted as windbreaks and, like the occasional shrubs, as specimens in the lawn.

Lawns were achieved with a great deal of work. Stumps, stones, and debris of building had to be cleared and the ground smoothed and levelled. Anne Langton wrote, in their third year of settlement, "... *what is to be the lawn is all in the rough...*". And judging by the pictures, that is putting it mildly. But lawns were important. They were an indication of prosperity and caring householders. Frequently, when the lawn was achieved, the house was named after the lawn and the specimen trees near or on it. "Maplelawns" and "Oaklawns" were not uncommon names and houses were also called "Balsamlawn". And once lawns were achieved, croquet frequently followed.

The island bed was a popular design form for flowers. For those who really wanted to grow flowers but had little time or energy, it was relatively easy to start cultivating a little patch and as time became available to enlarge and, if desired, elaborate it. An island bed gave a splash of colour with a minimum of maintenance. It, multiplied many times and often in fantastic patterns, was particularly popular in Victorian England and it made an easy transition to Canadian gardens. It is still a popular design form especially in public plantings.

In the 19th century, there was little in the way of foundation planting. It was not a part of the European garden tradition and, as a result, was not initiated into settlers new gardens. Frequently the foundations were left bare so that they could be banked with evergreens to hold the snow and provide insulation for the icy winters. While shrubs might be planted close to the house and herbs and flowers planted by the doorway for easy maintenance and picking, foundation planting as we know it today is 20th century North American in origin.

Finally, to the prosperous settler came wrought iron in the form of fencing around the house and/or the ornamental garden urn.

It is fascinating to read settlers' letters and diaries, old horticultural society lists, and to examine sketches, drawings and paintings of the houses and gardens of the 18th and 19th centuries in Canada. Changes and progressions came gradually and across the country in a steady progression. Gardens in the Maritimes and Quebec were mature when settlers were still clearing the forests in Ontario and, again, Ontario gardens were ready for the introduction of the lawnmower when pioneers were breaking ground in the west.

Now, these gardens are being recreated around historic houses. Garden historians have researched the house and property. In some cases, aerial photography has indicated the design of fields, paths and flower beds, and in others digging has produced viable seed which has reproduced early species. The gardens at Fort Louisbourg, Nova Scotia and Spadina in Toronto, Ontario are particularly good examples, but hundreds more have been meticulously researched, redesigned, and planted in pioneer villages and restored houses across the country.

Perhaps the words of Catharine Parr Traill, incidentally one of the most fruitful references for early gardening in Ontario, might also be as appropriate today about restored gardens as they were about the originals one hundred and fifty years ago. "*It is a pleasant thing to contemplate the growing prosperity of a new country. To see thriving farmers, with well-stored barns, and sunny pastures covered with flocks and herds; with fruitful garden and orchards, extending over spaces where once lay the trackless and impenetrable forest*".

* Plants of Pioneer and Early Days in Ontario - The Garden Club of Toronto, 777 Lawrence Avenue East, Toronto. M3C 1P2

STILLBROOK BY GRAHAM AND GAYE STRATFORD

The house consists of two parts, a main building to the east and a small wing to the west. The latter is reported to be the remains of a tavern, probably on the Kingston Road which existed before the Danforth Road was constructed in (?) 1806. During restorations in 1940, the names and dates of British soldiers billeted there during the War of 1812 were discovered, but the board on which they were written was either lost or covered over. The community room (hay loft?) above the tavern was converted to a ballroom when the main house was built. Only the two fireplaces in the "taproom", one fireplace in the ballroom, and possibly the ceiling beams there, are original. Under the bay window in the ballroom are a few segments of panelling, reportedly all that remains of the original full panelling.

The main house was built in the 1840's, possibly by a Scot named MacDonald who operated a distillery nearby, or by an Englishman, J. Montgomery Campbell, who restored the distillery which had been burnt down in 1844. The contractors were supposed to be the Burnett brothers, who also built Victoria Hall as well as the large white house to the west of Stillbrook, which housed the distillery manager, Mr. W.F. Pym. In addition to producing large quantities of whiskey, Mr. Campbell operated a "porkery", where he fattened 300 pigs for market on the coarse beer and wash which were bi-products of the distilling process. One of his partners was J.W. Standly who owned an estate at the end of the road and whose descendants still live on the property. Business prospered in the 1850s and 1860s and a row of cottages was constructed to house the distillery workers. The complex of all these and a few other neighbouring houses became known as Campbelltown. In this century, the house has been used as a summer house by a succession of owners, none of whom has remained more than one generation. Major restoration was undertaken in 1940 and 1960, and the house preserved as it is today with the addition of modern heating, plumbing and electricity.

Architecturally, the Imperial staircase in the main hall is of note as is the Brunswick construction of the walls of the old tavern. There are 10 fireplaces extant, although there were probably many more at one time, judging by the number of flues in the 5 chimneys. A copper sheathing roof on the original main wing has been replaced by conventional shingles.

Except during the addition of a small sunroom to the south of the living room, the configuration of the house is virtually the same as it was at the beginning of its existence.

J. Montgomery Campbell was one of Grafton's prominent residents for nearly twenty years. From his name, one would judge him to be of Scottish descent, but tradition makes him an Englishman. He appears to have been plentifully supplied with capital, the distillery being one of his projects. In all probability, he bought the property from MacDonald, enlarging it and improving it. A distillery of this size supplied far more than the local trade and

reference has been made in the account of Grafton Harbour to the exportation in 1847 of 500 casks of whiskey. At this time, Standly was associated with Campbell and may have supplied much of the capital, but later the firm was known as Campbell and Pym.

W.F. Pym, who built and resided in the house now owned by Mrs. J. Cochrane, was employed in the distillery office. In the 1850s, the store of John Taylor in Grafton was supplied with liquors from the Haldimand Distillery as old account sheets still extant testify. By this time, the industry had grown to such proportions that the place was known as Campbelltown, a name which lingers to the present day.

Whether as a result of his profits or from his own private fortune, Campbell built **Stillbrook**, a residence that must have been beautiful at one time, but has been allowed to decay for many years. Its ballroom was famous throughout the countryside. Sounds of revelry by night often proceeded from it in the distant '50s. Happily, **Stillbrook** is being restored to its former glory by its present owners.

Glimpses of "Major John Campbell" may be seen in Dean Paget's *Memories of Sir Charles Paget*. When the Paget house was burned in 1863, the family lived at **Stillbrook** for a time.

Mr. Hugh Ross remembers accompanying the Grafton Brass Band to the station to welcome Campbell's return from a visit to the old country. As the train puffed into the station, the band appropriately played "The Campbells are Coming"!

In the early 1960s, the Campbell and Pym fortune declined and both families returned to England. The body of Campbell's young wife, Emily, lies in an untended plot in St. George's Cemetery. His portrait, **Stillbrook**, and Campbelltown give to this "forefather of the hamlet" a precarious immortality.

**SWINGING WITH THE GOVERNORS:
NEWCASTLE DISTRICT ELECTIONS 1836 AND 1841
BY QUENTIN BROWN**

The elections of 1836 and 1841 were noteworthy. In campaigns for the last election in Upper Canada and the first in the Province of Canada, the governors acted as party leaders: Constitutionalist in 1836 and Reform in 1841.

A number of factors figure in these two elections in the Newcastle District: the direct and indirect influence of the governor himself; the immaturity of the party concept with consequent vote-splitting; the significance of the choice of sites for the hustings; the impact of the public press; and the intimidation factor during voting week. The Newcastle District, comprising the eventual counties of Durham, Northumberland, Peterborough and Victoria, elected four Constitutionalist, that is Tory, members to the last legislature of Upper Canada, and three Reform members to the first legislature of the Province of Canada. This swing helped deliver provincial victories as the constituencies went with the governor in each election.

THE ELECTION OF 1836

The Reformers, with a comfortable majority in the House of Assembly, were apprehensive about the arrival in January 1836, of Sir Francis Bond Head as Lieutenant-Governor. Bond Head was an unknown to the Reformers and to the Conservatives; both factions were to learn quickly enough how singularly he worked.

Shortly after his arrival, Bond Head filled three vacancies on the six-man Executive Council with Reformers, a sop of the sentiments of the Assembly. However, when it became clear that he had no intention of consulting his Council on any regular basis, the whole Council resigned. When the Assembly failed to receive an explanation from the Governor, indeed saw him appoint a new Executive Council of solid Conservative stripe, it expressed its dismay by stopping the Supplies, the monies required to keep the wheels of government turning. Within a week, Bond Head prorogued the Legislature, but more importantly, he refused to sign the money bills on his desk, effectively ham-stringing all improvement projects in the colony.

As work across the province came to a stop, from Sandwich to Cornwall, everyone knew something had gone wrong. By the beginning of May, addresses began to pour into the Lieutenant-Governor's office expressing concern for the plight of the colony. Bond Head claimed himself "...*guiltless of the distress which Upper Canada must shortly most bitterly endure...*"; clearly implied that the people's real enemy was the Reform-minded Assembly; and allowed that he alone "*could grant them redress*". In the forthcoming election, Bond Head astutely saw that the "*one notion that all could rally round*" was loyalty to the Crown.

Inhabitants of Cavan and Manvers, two back townships in the Newcastle District, met in the King's Arms Inn in Cavanville on May 9, 1836. John Huston, John Thompson, Patrick Maguire and others representing "*the loyal yeomanry of this section of the County*" drafted an address applauding Sir Francis Bond Head's "*...uncompromising conduct ... in supporting British supremacy, and the constitution of the province inviolate*". A delegation of 29 delivered the address, with nearly 4,000 signatures to the governor, and received a fulsome and delighted response that sounded like an election manifesto.

Bond Head hoped the election would provide opportunity to elect members who would either support or oppose him. The issue would be who "*...has the greatest power to do good to Upper Canada,*" to provide an increase in wealth for the people of the province. To dispute with Bond Head was to dispute with the Mother Country, "*to quarrel with your own 'bread and butter.'*" Rather than elect members who would stop the supplies again, Bond Head asked the voters to "*...choose fearlessly to embark your interests with my character, depend upon it I will take parental care of them both.*" After the election, Bond Head would "tranquillize" the country and use his influence with the mother country to alter land granting and to encourage British emigration.

In this reply, Bond Head revealed himself as autocratic and paternal; his response to the yeomen from Newcastle epitomized his approach to the whole province. Dominate on the local scene was the *Cobourg Star and Newcastle General Advertiser*, a thorough-going Tory mouthpiece.

Sensitive to the arrogance of the Governor's response, the *Cobourg Star* felt obliged to comment that His Excellency wanted the deputation to take no offense from his remarks which were meant "*to inform the People at large of the true position in which both themselves and him respectively stood*". Bond Head believed, as he told a Home District deputation, "*...the people of Upper Canada detest democracy; they revere the Constitutional Charter, and are consequently staunch in their allegiance to their King...*" John Langton, a pro-government, university-trained land owner later to become Auditor-General of Canada West, despite his sympathy for the "*clever and most determined*" Bond Head, objected to the "*want of dignity*" in these responses which were "*almost like electioneering addresses.*" The Governor talked too much of himself and was condescending.

Bond Head, confident that he could "*lick the radicals,*" dissolved the legislature on May 30, 1836, with the new assembly to convene July 16. Reform leaders, on the defensive, responded promptly by commending those who had supported the Reform actions. They recognized that there was a clear difference, not always understood by the electors, between the 'supplies' stopped by the legislature, just over £ 9,000 or pounds Sterling, and the 'money bills' which had passed the legislature but which Bond Head had refused to sign (£ 160,000). Newspapers, such as the *Brockville Recorder*, attacked Bond Head's stoppage of the money bills. "**One Who Knows**" addressed a flyer to the Freeholders of Northumberland giving details on what had happened and defending the actions of Reform

legislators. G.M. Boswell, an articulate Reform incumbent in Northumberland, noted that a "*wise, free and impartial Government*," so essential to a "*noble-spirited people*" required representatives "*with a jealous eye [for] your liberties*" willing to "*reform all abuses.*" Reformers, still smarting from Sir John Colborne's parting tactic of creating 57 new rectories, claimed tithing would undoubtedly follow a Conservative victory.

Conservatives did not mind the confusion between money bills and supplies. The stoppage of supplies prompted the refusal to sign the money bills and the cumulative result, as John Langton explained, was "*that the money which had been granted for roads, canals, etc., all over the country cannot be expended.*" This, according to Langton, led to increased migration across the border to earn cash, and to a rising demand for the dissolution of the Assembly; he was certain half the radicals would not be returned.

Conservative hand-bills identified issues quickly. "***Hypocrisy and Falsehood Exposed***" carried the blacklist of members who had voted to stop the supplies. "***Electors Beware!***" warned that supporters of the Constitutional Reform Society were "*Revolutionists in the garb of Reformers.*" "***Farmers Beware!***" refuted the Reform rumours about tithes.

The election statements of the Constitutional candidates in the Newcastle District painted their opponents as revolutionaries and emphasized the need for public works and prosperity. Henry Ruttan of Cobourg, sheriff of the Newcastle District said Reform Members of the House of Assembly (MHAs), "*professed REFORM, whilst their acts during the last session, have beyond a doubt proved that they seek REVOLUTION.*" With a constitutional victory, "*you will in a very few months see our public works begun, money assume its natural channel, lands and produce rise in value, trade begin to enliven our towns and Emigration again directed to our shores.*" George Strange Boulton, Tory incumbent for Durham riding and self-professed "*poor man's friend*," wanted to teach salutary lessons to "*the enemies of British Supremacy and British Institutions*" as he stressed the need to promote prosperity and immigration. Alexander McDonell, Tory incumbent for Northumberland, promised to support "*the Sterling principles of our glorious Constitution.*"

The Durham campaign was muddled when Tory George Elliott came "*forward against Brown and Smith, and in conjunction with Boulton.*" The local election agents, including John Huston of Cavan, were called to Port Hope. Richard Anhill, who considered himself "*moderately popular amongst the orangemen*" was prepared to do all in his power to Elliott. Reformers countered Elliott's entrance with a hand-bill quoting an apparent dialogue between a Darlington farmer and a Cavan freeholder, making it clear that Elliott had been suborned by Boulton expressly to defeat and replace Brown.

'Party' lines had been heightened by the partisanship in the Legislative Assembly elected in 1834. The Family Compact, the name the Reformers tagged to the Conservatives in that legislature, continued to control the executive and judicial branches. The Reform majority was able to defeat or stall government programmes in the legislature.

respect towards our Roman Catholic brethren for their conduct during our late elections". In Durham, Elliott "...acknowledged the cordial support he, as an Orangeman, had received from the Catholics."

The final election results revealed a high degree of voting the ticket in both Durham and Northumberland; this suggests the issues were more important than the personalities. In Durham, Boulton and Elliott were elected with 419 and 408 votes respectively; Brown with 259 and Smith with 229 trailed. In Northumberland, McDonnell and Ruttan garnered 598 and 586 votes respectively; Gilchrist had 460 and Boswell 434. The Constitutionals had about 60% of the vote in Durham and 55% in Northumberland.

Across the province, by the calculations of Peterborough lawyer, Stafford Kirkpatrick, *"there have been returned 43 Constitutionals and only 19 Revolutionists. I don't think the supplies will be stopped again in a hurry."* If the experience in Newcastle was matched elsewhere, Bond Head had provided a strong rallying cry.

THE ELECTION OF 1841

Much had changed by 1841. Rather than prosperity and domestic peace, the election of 1836 had been the prelude for the rebellion of 1837. With the temporary eclipse of the moderate Reform leaders, the firebrand MacKenzie had an open field in which to manoeuvre. Bond Head had continued his *"bitter vendetta against all Reformers,"* and Sir George Arthur, his successor, pursued a similar course. Lord Durham's whirlwind visit discomforted those in power. Through the summer of 1839, the Reformers held *"Durham Meetings"* to study the report, parts of which had begun to circulate in April. There was anticipation to major change, and key figures in the 1836 Constitutional victory were supporting Durham, notably Egerton Ryerson, the Methodist educator, and William Hamilton Merritt, the developer of the Welland Canal. Charles Poulett Thomson arrived in the fall of 1839 with a mandate to implement a union of the provinces of Upper and Lower Canada and to establish a government that looked like responsible government but did not impinge on British or royal authority.

Thomson sold the idea of union as the basis for economic prosperity and political tranquillity; and the British Parliament passed the Act of Union in July 1840. The election of 84 members, 42 from Upper Canada, took place in March 1841. The Newcastle District had three seats instead of four under the new alignments: Durham, Northumberland South and Northumberland North. Given his mandate, Thomson was still the political leader but he had to work with a wider base than Bond Head. The union was only possible if Reformers supported it; he needed Reformers to give the semblance of popular government.

Northumberland South suffered from an excess of Conservative candidates while Reformers coalesced behind G.M. Boswell. "A Freeholder," in an August 1840 letter to the

editor of the *Cobourg Star*, grudgingly accepted Cobourg lawyer Donald Bethune, warmly endorsed Adam H. Meyers from Trent River, and suggested both step aside for Henry Ruttan. Certainly, he was correct to see the need for the Conservatives to have only one candidate. The editor of the *Star* boycotted a Thomson meeting which adopted an address "*sufficiently laudatory for the most inconsistent*" to sign. Nonetheless, some prominent Conservatives, including Henry Ruttan, D'Arcy E. Boulton brother of G.S. Boulton of Durham, stage-coach magnate William Weller, and prominent merchants Ebenezer Perry and W.S. Conger, had attended the public meeting which expressed gratitude that in a period of momentous change a practical statesman was at the helm. It also hoped that Thomson, now Lord Sydenham and Toronto, would be impressed with the industry, loyalty, integrity and general intelligence of the populace, and fight for privileges equal to those in the mother country. Reformer G.M. Boswell also attended and signed the laudatory address.

The editor of the *Star* felt that the Conservatives should be ambivalent about a governor whose "desperate experiment" for union was anticipated with "*painful apprehension*." The Governor was too ill to have his ship stop at Cobourg and received address in Montreal. Sydenham replied, in part, "*I hope to see this Country British in feeling - British in institutions - a source of strength instead of anxiety to the Parent State, and a land in which those who dwell in it may feel justly proud*." The editor of the *Star*, admittedly disarmed, hoped this was a sign the governor was improving in more than his health.

Conservatives in the legislature had had to support Sydenham's "*desperate experiment*". As the election campaign proceeded, Conservative electors faced a similar fate. It was not easy for them to oppose the governor. The *Cobourg Star* continued its complaints. It did not like Sydenham choosing his own candidates in one place after another. He was alleged to have interfered in the nominating process in eighteen ridings by early November. Sydenham was hand-picking men with whom he felt he could work and his choices were rarely Conservatives.

Dr. James Pringle, a farmer, declared his intention of running as an independent in Northumberland South in early November. He wanted restrictions on the importation of American grain and changes in bank practices in rural areas. The editor of the *Cobourg Star* considered Pringle "*strictly conservative*" and regretted that he would divide the Conservative vote; "*he and the agriculturists of this riding must be perfectly assured of Mr. Bethune's desire to do justice to their interests*."

Donald Bethune also formally entered the race in November. In his view, the province had suffered discord and distress because of the "*selfish designs of a few wicked men... offering the specious promise of freedom from fancied oppression and injury*." As it was too late to oppose the union of the provinces, Bethune wanted "*representative power... entrusted to men of moral probity and undoubted adherence to British supremacy and British institutions*." Then the united province might advance to "*Agricultural and Commercial importance and to the public prosperity*."

Adam H. Meyers became the third Conservative candidate to declare in Northumberland South in late November. He supported local development such as the Trent Canal and the Murray Canal. He favoured reciprocal trade in grain with the United States; wished school lands to be used to improve education; and wanted a new system of provincial banking.

With so many Conservative candidates, the *Star* sought unanimity. At one stage, the editor proposed that the Tories as a party determine a common platform including stands on responsible government, local powers of taxation, customs duties, and wild lands. How much unanimity could be achieved in the absence of party machinery is not clear. Toward that end, the *Star* may have thought the newspaper columns a suitable medium.

Henry Ruttan responded forthrightly in favour of voting for persons rather than parties. In his view, the conformity implied by the party system was responsible for tarring the many with the brush appropriate only to the extremists. Electors should vote for a candidate "*generally acknowledged to have been moderate and reasonable in his political course.*"

The *Star* favoured Bethune and this led to criticism from Meyers particularly after the paper declared that Bethune had a sizable margin of committed electors. "G" suggested a convention of "*respectable and influential Gentlemen*" drawn equally from each township, meeting in a central location such as Colborne, might decide who should get the "*undivided support of the conservative interest.*"

The conservative *Star* continued to attack Sydenham. The Governor-General, it felt, had made various appointments that detracted from the importance of the offices and which lowered public confidence in those appointed. And now, in the election of the legislature, people were being canvassed by his "*creatures and nominees.*" At least two Montreal newspapers supported Sydenham's interference because it forwarded "*his measure of Anglifying the Colony.*" The editor of the *Montreal Herald* concluded, "*the theory of a Governor interfering with elections is a bad one, but the practice of it at present is a very good one.*" Sydenham was in a difficult situation: from Canada West he needed friendly voices to help him manage the massive French voice from Quebec.

In Durham riding, the battle took shape in mid-winter. George S. Boulton, a member for a dozen years, tossed his hat into the ring in December; and stood on his consistent and upright past record. He was happy to represent an "*intelligent, independent and loyal*" constituency which could not be "*bought with a barrel of whiskey.*" He supported God and King, and as a landed proprietor, his interest was connected with theirs; in promoting their prosperity he promoted his own. And he leaned on agents like John Huston in Cavan "*to get as many as possible at the hustings at the opening of the poll.*" Boulton's supporters knew the importance of getting to the poll early; there was always the chance that the opponent would withdraw before his supporters arrived; and a strong early lead could often influence fence-sitters.

John Tucker Williams, the first mayor of Port Hope, emerged as Boulton's opponent in January. He showed disdain for past administrations, but supported the "distinguished" Sydenham, in order "*to allay party animosities, abandon extreme points of political controversy, and have peace and prosperity.*" An avowed advocate of "*wise, liberal, conciliatory and enlightened policy,*" Williams wanted "*impartial justice*" for all "*classes of the community.*" He opposed the Family Compact and any "*odious species of Oligarchy*" no matter how talented which monopolized places of honour and emolument because of family connections "*or the more arrogant assumption of superior intellectual endowments.*" Williams too had people working for him in back townships like Eldon where it was said, his "*committee [were] endeavouring to turn the people against Mr. Boulton by ... preaching false doctrine to them daily.*"

In Northumberland North, Dr. John Gilchrist, a former Reform member defeated in 1836, carried the Reform colours. Alexander McDonell, the Tory incumbent, was challenged by two other Tories, Frederick P. Rubidge and Frederick Ferguson.

The choice of polling places was announced on February 13. The Northumberland North election would begin March 15 in Peterborough. Voters in Northumberland South and in Durham would go to the polls a week later, at Colborne for the former and at Newtonville in Clarke Township for the latter.

For this early spring election, the choice of Newtonville concerned both Durham candidates, but seemed to work especially against Boulton who relied heavily on voters up to 80 miles away to the north "*at a season when travelling is impossible to those who must pass rivers without bridges and creeks without crossways.*" This virtual "*disenfranchising of the back country*" was a reminder that the old system of elections continued into the new union.

At Peterborough, the first poll to open, voting proceeded with relative calm until Thursday when it appeared Gilchrist had the election secured. Then several people met in a tavern to plan the break-up of the election by seizing and destroying the poll-book to prevent Gilchrist's legal return. The plan was foiled because "*on the first alarm, [Captain Fraser, the returning officer] quietly slipped the poll-book beneath his coat, where it remained secured.*" That evening, during the supper hour, Fraser's room at White's Hotel was entered and a valise cut open; Fraser, however, had taken the poll-book to dinner with him thus preventing a second attempt to steal it. Rubidge had withdrawn earlier; McDonell withdrew after the raid on the hustings, and Ferguson the following morning, leaving the spoils to Gilchrist.

The main action in the Northumberland South polls stemmed from the division of the Conservative vote between Bethune and Meyers. Meyers refused to withdraw as he waited for a large number of out-voters to arrive. The editor of the *Star* remained convinced that Bethune would have won had he had a clear run against George M. Boswell, the eventual winner.

The hustings at Newtonville was not a happy place. Boulton looked for his supporters from Ops, Mariposa, Eldon and Emily to arrive at the polls by noon on Tuesday. But this time *"the Scotch elders of Eldon, who were nearly all ex-soldiers, marched to the polls in a body, dressed in navy blue and led by their pipers and voted to a man against Boulton."* Other Williams supporters encountered *"the interference of persons having neither vote nor interest in the County."* Insults, intimidation, annoyance, pushing and *"having clubs flourished over their heads"* sent some away declaring that they would not again attempt to vote. Boulton clearly approved of this obstruction offered *"by persons who were living at his expense and marching under his banner."* James Smith, William's lawyer, along with others in his party, got wind of a plan to tear down the hustings, destroy the poll-books and kill Williams, so, when on Saturday morning a violent uproar began, Smith warned Boulton to call off his bully boys or lose his own life. *"Mr. Boulton and his friend, Mr. Elliott...interposed their influence"* and the assault was abandoned.

Nevertheless, the mid-day calm was broken when John H. Marshall of Emily, a 28 year-old cooper and father of four was *"struck and killed"* as he was descending from the hustings after having voted for Williams. Dr. John Hutchison and Marshall, having travelled from Peterborough *"all Friday night"* with H. Best and two Cavan voters, reached the hustings about 11 a.m. Hutchison, writing to correct erroneous statements made in the press by Boulton, stated that Marshall conducted himself with *"strictest propriety and decorum,"* there was no altercation or tussle; he died an almost instantaneous death from a blow to the head from a cudgel wielded by one, Joseph Huston. The Cavan Blazers apparently spirited Huston away and prevented his immediate apprehension. A warrant for his arrest on the count of manslaughter was issued on August 12. Huston later gave himself up and was tried in Cobourg in October and sentenced to eight months imprisonment and a fine of £25. John Huston, embarrassed by the actions of his only son, rewrote his will leaving Joseph only five shillings. Boulton lost to Williams by over 100 votes of 1400 cast; the second highest turnout in the province.

The Conservatives lost all three elections in the Newcastle District in 1841. They seemed hurt by the confusion of the issues and the belief that Sydenham was not on their side. In the end, they lost because they had too many candidates in two of the races and intimidation tactics backfired in the third. The hustings sites chosen by Sydenham were radical departures from the past; but there is little evidence that the successful local candidates were hand-picked by Sydenham.

Stafford Kirkpatrick, perhaps representative of other Newcastle District Conservatives, was *"confident until Lord Sydenham leaves us we will never have peace and harmony."* He predicted Sydenham would leave early, either *"in a pet like Durham"* or *"on the plea of ill health;"* and, although the country would be worse than he found it, *"he will get the credit in England of being the best Governor Canada can have."*

The *Monthly Review* saw the main election issue to be the *"continued connexion of the Colony with the Mother Country."* In the Newcastle District loyalty was never in doubt.

Henry Ruttan's 1840 estimate was that of 16,000 eligible voters in the district, half were born in the Old Country, half in Canada or the United States. The disaffected totalled only about 800 Canadians and 2000 Americans.

The *Monthly Review*'s second issue was "*the administration of the government in harmony with the people's representatives.*" This was a significant concern that skated close to what Reformers meant by responsible government. Williams used such language in his candidacy; and Gilchrist and Boswell were part of the Reform tradition.

The vice-regal representatives played pivotal roles in both elections. Sir Francis Bond Head chose to capitalize on the gullibility of the electorate and launched a tub-thumping campaign to cruse the rebels and republicans and to rally the electorate to the flag and the crown. He was aided by the difficult and unproductive performance of two years of Reform leadership in the Assembly. In fact, the Reform concern with the proper flow of initiative and responsibility within the walls of government held little interest for the farmer, merchant or lumberman. The electorate simply wanted to get on with their lives and Bond Head said "trust me" and it would happen. Lord Sydenham and Toronto, on the other hand, executing his orders in his own distinctive way, chose to break up the old cliques, work with individuals, seek fresh faces, and open the process of government. This upset the Tories and pleased the Reformers. With the promise of a new look to government, Reform took the bit in its teeth and ran with it; the Tories found themselves playing catch-up.

Over the short, swift election of 1836, the editorial writers, the pamphleteers, the scribblers of all sorts had to work quickly; there were only five or six issues of the weekly newspapers before the voting began. Hand-bills and posters proliferated on each side. The 1841 election, by contrast, had a run-up of nine months in which to parse and analyse every issue, argument or move made by either side. Newspaper editors never lacked copy: scribes pondered their topics and set them forth sometimes deftly and with impact, sometimes with too much elegance and euphony.

While the 1836 election in the Newcastle District had its share of inebriation and high jinks at the hustings, it was the 1841 event that drew the most blood. The Colborne poll seems to have concluded without tragedy, while the hustings at Peterborough and Newtonville descended into appalling donnybrooks. The *Monthly Review* blamed the intimidation and the bullying at the hustings on "*a portion of the Tory party, connived at, if not directly encouraged, by some of their leaders.*"

The siting of the hustings played their part. In 1836, Sully (Harwood) and Graham's (Bailieboro) were on principal north-south routes, but Sully was within ten miles of the western boundary of Northumberland, requiring long journeys from Cramahe, Murray, Dummer and Belmont for instance, and Graham's was actually on the eastern margin of Durham, remote from Darlington, Cartwright, Ops, Verulam, Fenelon, etc. Both sites were

flanked by recent British settlers and Orangemen, and thus favoured Conservative interests. In 1841, Colborne for Northumberland South was central on an east-west axis and close to the shore of Lake Ontario, not badly located for the riding with its new configuration; and while Peterborough lay close to the western margin of Northumberland North, it was the accustomed focal point for much of that riding. Newtonville in Clarke Township was again central on an east-west axis and not far from the Ontario shore, but a long way from back townships such as Eldon, Fenelon and Verulam. Colborne and Newtonville were closer to communities with Loyalist, Canadian or American roots; Peterborough was a burgeoning town with intense commercial interests; gone was the pervading Conservative milieu of earlier elections. In short, with only one poll per riding, the site of the poll had its impact on voter turnout.

Between the elections of 1836 and 1841, the Newcastle District experienced a dramatic swing which found the voters supporting the governors.

AN 1863 CRUISE ON LAKE ONTARIO BY ARCHIBALD LAMONT

Good evening, Ladies and Gentlemen.

You have a playground at your front door and this talk is about a great adventure on and around it long ago. Sailing about on Lake Ontario for pleasure and fun undoubtedly was a sport soon after the arrival here of people of European ancestry and possibly much earlier than that. There is one record dating from 1801, though C.H.J Snider tells us that "*the first private yacht mentioned on Lake Ontario... was offered for sale in 1832.*" Since those early days, there have been many thousands of cruises throughout the Lake, but very few stories exist describing their details. On August 3 of the year 1863, the Yacht BREEZE set out from the Royal Canadian Yacht Club on a cruise that resulted in a diary full of delightful detail. It is the purpose of this paper to pass on some of that delight to you. The diary today is in the National Archives of Canada, a gift to the Nation from George and Arthur Boddington, great nephews of the diarist.

BREEZE ARRIVES AT COBOURG

I'm going to start with an excerpt from the diary dealing with the arrival of the Yacht BREEZE at Cobourg on August 4 of 1863. Cobourg and some of its citizens figure prominently in the diary, many people being mentioned by name. Here is the arrival:

"At 8h a.m. we ran between Cobourg piers and met the RIVET'S dinghy taking her crew out to bathe. We were still at breakfast <but> two or three of us went on deck to get the anchor ready just as we entered the inner harbour, but were too late. Burrell, not knowing the way the boat carried with her, luffed up too sharp, a puff of wind struck us just before, and so we ran straight into the wharf. Luckily, our bowsprit head was higher than the wharf so the bobstay lifted us. Loafers on the wharf shoved it off, and we anchored all right between RIVET and PALMETTO. The boats in harbour were the PALMETTO and ZOUAVE of Hamilton, the BREEZE, RIVET and DART of Toronto, the ARROW, GORILLA, WIDEAWAKE, KITTEN and JOHN A. MACDONALD of Cobourg."

"After a pipe, I attired myself and went into town to call on the inhabitants. Did the Barrons, Chattertons and MacPhersons, the proverbial Cobourg hospitality flourishing like a green bay tree. The others loafed about town. All assembled at noon for tiffen except Morrison, Hancock, and Duggan. Mr. Barron and Mr. Street visited us."

"Delicious as ever, in the afternoon many of the Cobourg girls assembled on board the RIVET. I joined the crew and we had a jolly sail; put down two buoys to mark the course. We had twenty four on board all told, not bad for a 16 ton boat. There was plenty of wind and little sea, so everyone enjoyed it immensely. We got in again at half past six, and I rowed myself on board the BREEZE just in time to join the rest at dinner. Just as we

finished dinner, the Cobourg Band came down and getting on board the JOHN A. sailed about the harbour playing melodiously the while. All Cobourg turned out to stroll on the pier and enjoy the cool evening breeze. It was very free and easy and also very charming."

"(Just after midnight, we) returned from the hut of one Crusoe - no relation to Robinson - a "big bug" or sachem in these parts. To the sea rovers gave he a nautch, likewise beer. Many of the younger and fairer natives were present in their ordinary costume, reserving the full effort of their most gorgeous apparel for the ensuing night. Tattooing does not prevail along this coast. The religion is unknown and it matters not, but I have been credibly informed by some of the more ancient and unmarried females that their fair juniors are much given to the worship of a mysterious deity called theossifer."

In this short piece, we have learned some various things - what the Cobourg establishment did for entertainment, who some of that establishment were, what boats were in the harbour, how the BREEZE came to town, what our diarist thought of the Cobourg girls, and so on. "The Crusoe" mentioned was one of the local establishments, his "hut" was a big house, a "nautch" is an entertainment, and "theossifer" is "the officer". The diarist was engaged in arch humour in the whole of the paragraph.

BREEZE came to town because the people on board her were on a holiday cruise, and because Cobourg's fourth annual sailing regatta was taking place. They had four happy days ahead of them, but before I tell you of those days, I should tell you about the actors.

BAINES THE DIARIST AND HIS FELLOW OFFICERS

Our diarist was Henry E. Baines, 23 years of age, Lieutenant in the Royal Artillery, stationed at Fort York. Baines was at Fort York because of the reinforcement of that fort brought about by warlike threats against Canada issuing from the United States. I mentioned above that he belonged to an institution that regarded the Americans with some contempt, a view that derived from the fact that officers in the Royal Artillery considered themselves to be the elite of the elite, and thus superior to all other mortals. Besides, the Americans were the potential enemy. Baines was an experienced yachtsman, with his own small sailboat, and crewed in the Yacht DART for a summer cruise around the Lake in 1862. Like all Royal Artillery officers of the time, Baines had an intensive education in observations, in writing, and in illustration. All of these abilities were brought to bear in his preparation of the diary, as you will see. Baines incorporated into his diary many watercolour and other sketches and an unmistakeable joie de vivre and readiness to take life as it comes, as shown by his reaction to the events of the Regatta Ball. Three years after his wonderful cruise, he lost his life in line of duty at the big fire in Quebec City, dying a hero to the whole populace of that city.

Baines was on leave from his duties for one month while he enjoyed the cruise of the Yacht BREEZE on Lake Ontario. With him for the whole duration of the cruise were to

other officers at the Royal Artillery, Lieutenants Woodfull and Harvey, and a law student, Fred Duggan. All were under 25 years of age. In addition to these, for the leg from Toronto to Cobourg, they had aboard four other military officers, who, with the owner and others, I will tell you about, made a total of twelve people!

Reading about that crew of young men on holiday so long ago is delight. Youthful spirits burst forth from the page, as they plunged into the cold water first thing in the morning to "bathe" or at other times, enjoy the company of young women. They made their way around the lake, signing, fishing, observing, bathing, enjoying the company of women at times, dealing with difficulties. Many have followed, but I doubt that any have enjoyed themselves more. The diary records that "*none of us were possessed of any particular nautical skills, but we pulled well together, and took things as they came.*" In other writings, I have referred to the crew of the BREEZE as "The Happy Warriors". And so they were.

Of them all, we have but one specific picture, sketched by Baines. One morning, "*Harvey got into the dinghy with a towel and a big sponge and, having disrobed, indulged in a regular sponge bath. He looked so pretty that we cast off the painter and set him adrift in order to have a good view from a distance. He looked like a mermaid, only rather more so.*"

THE YACHT BREEZE

For the cruise in 1863, Baines' boat was the Yacht BREEZE and his skipper Dr. Edward M. Hodder.

The Yacht BREEZE, was a wooden boat of 17 tons, cutter-rigged and deep-draught. She had no radio, no record player, no engine - no such things even existed. When the wind fell to nothing, she could only stay and wait where she was until more came along. Of the cabin arrangement, Baines says little, except that "*To each man was assigned a resting place. The Commodore had the aftermost berth on the starboard side, I the one forward on the same side, Woodfull opposite the Commodore, and Duggan the one forward on the port. Mellor turned in with the Commodore, and Harvey spread a mattress between the berths on the floor. His were the most comfortable diggings of all, as, no matter which tack we were on there was no chance of his falling out of bed...As our uniform cases reposed in the cockpit, we were forced to adopt some dodge to enable us to have an accessible depot for tobacco, pipes, clothing and small deer generally below. Our plan was to raise the mattress and insinuate our stores beneath it so as to make a pillow. It was a crafty move, but from it came great grief to me hereafter.*"

BREEZE was built in Toronto in 1862 for Dr. Hodder, who had great hopes for her on the racing circuit. However, despite that she was reported in the newspapers as "*very carefully built with the latest improvements faithfully carried out in model and rig...she had not fulfilled the expectations formed of her by her builder and owner. In time, as her points*

are better understood, she may exhibit an improvement." In fact, she didn't. Dr. Hodder abandoned BREEZE to another owner in 1868, and acquired a bigger vessel. BREEZE at some later time unknown to me, was "*lost off the mouth of the Humber River,*" according to Snider.

COMMODORE HODDER, SKIPPER/OWNER OF BREEZE

Early in the diary, describing the preparations for departure, the diarist describes "*all hands acting as stevedores and the Commodore working and superintending like two.*" Other than this comment, and a sketch, he says nothing about his skipper. That is a pity, for there is a great deal to be said about the man. A sketch in the diary shows him during a stop at Presqu'ile, somewhat heavy, grey-bearded, his crew surrounding him, and his boat lying at anchor. Dr. Hodder was a big man not only physically, but also mentally and in the management of boats.

At the age of eleven years in 1822, Hodder went to sea as a Midshipman in the Royal Navy, serving with his father, Captain Hodder, R.N. His service in the R.N. was cut short by a wish to study medicine. By the time of his death, his name "*was a household word in Toronto. Skilful, cautious, affable, and handsome, he was a universal favourite.*" And no wonder, for the good Dr. Hodder was indefatigable. A practising physician, he was also Coroner of Toronto, president of various medical bodies, a leading member of the active staff of two hospitals, a co-founder of a medical school, and dean for some years of another.

With all his professional engagement, though, Dr. Hodder still found time to indulge his love of the maritime life, and indulged it whole-heartedly until his death in 1878. Longer than any other, he was Commodore of the Royal Canadian Yacht Club for a total of over twenty years; from 1856 to 1878, there were few years in which he was not the lead man in that club.

He never forgot his early experience in the Royal Navy and was obviously a careful and competent captain of his vessel. When BREEZE approached Weller's Bay (Consecon Bay) in 1863, we can be sure there were no good charts showing this area in detail at the time. Even had there been charts, they would no doubt have been unreliable, for that shore is a lee shore and there are shifting beds of sand on it. Never mind. The Commodore knew exactly what to do, "*...having anchored and lowered head-sails, the Commodore and Burrell took the dinghy and lead line and proceeded to examine (the) opening. Soon returning, they reported it practicable.*" Those were exactly the procedures used by the great maritime explorers in the days not long before Hodder's experience as a midshipman in the R.N.

Commodore Hodder knew his business very well indeed, and used his knowledge to help others. At the time of the diary, the chart of the lake in general use was one produced in 1850 by Lt. Frederick L. Herbert, R.N., and published in Toronto. It gave soundings in the

lake at large, but told nothing of the harbours and ports frequented by mariners. The Commodore, evidently unhappy with the lack of information available as guidance to the harbours, produced a little book in 1855, entitled **THE HARBOURS AND PORTS OF LAKE ONTARIO**. On the cover of his book, he describes the contents as having arisen "*from recent surveys and personal observations.*" His professional medical responsibilities show through his avocational interest when he writes in the preface to his book "*it will gratify me, if through any effort of mine, a single life is saved, or the smallest craft that navigates this noble lake is preserved from wreck.*"

With the book, he was not finished. At the time of its publication, he says that he has himself "*visited every Port, with the exception of the Sackets Harbor and Port Ontario.*" By 1866, he had visited all, with no exceptions, and published a chart of the Lake that included the harbours for the first time. Baines doesn't say much about the activities of The Commodore on the 1863 cruise of BREEZE. It seems likely that he was off sounding the harbours in which they found themselves, checking previous information he had developed and finding new things, all with the 1866 chart in mind.

"SHIP'S STAFF" OF THE YACHT BREEZE

To assist him in the running of his vessel, Hodder employed a professional seaman, the pilot, "*Burrell, a strong weather-beaten fellow.*" Says the diarist of him "*This latter was a good type of the better class of Lake hands. During the summer season, he sails in one of the large schooners that carry freights or corn grain or lumber from one lake port to another and occasionally ventures on a coasting voyage to Halifax or St. John. His wages might be \$35 or \$40 per month. In the winter when the navigation of the Lakes is rendered impossible by the cold, he betakes himself northward to the unsettled districts and traps the smaller wild animals for the sake of their skins. With tea and tobacco, he said, he could rough it anywhere, and I believe him. These Canadian sailors have a good deal of the American versatility in their composition. He was a most useful fellow on board, knowing nearly every harbour on the Lake thoroughly, and being a good seaman, though he was not accustomed to small craft. This made him distrust the ship and hesitate about carrying on a good deal at first, but latterly he gained confidence enough and made the most of her.*"

With two such men as Hodder and Burrell running BREEZE, it really is surprising to learn that, in the course of a three week cruise, they managed to lose two dinghies to bad weather. But they did indeed.

For cabin duties, BREEZE sailed with a Private Miles aboard, but at Cobourg Miles was discharged for unstated reasons, and another "*boy answering to the name of Alfred was shipped and instructed to make himself generally useful. A cadaverous loutish looking fellow, requiring constant stirring up, he saved us a deal of dirty work in the cleaning and cooking departments.*"

Finally, the ship's staff included Mellor, the Commodore's young son.

THE STAY IN COBOURG

As we have heard, BREEZE arrived in Cobourg on August 4. Figuring prominently there in the shore-side activities of the next few days was the Globe Hotel, on the northeast corner of King and McGill streets. Built in 1848, it was touted as the "*finest hotel between Toronto and Montreal*," a description somewhat at odds with Baines' description of the ballroom. Its reputed grandeur did not save it, for it burned the year following Baines' visit.

From the diary, here is the whole of Chapter 3 describing part of the stay in Cobourg:

"Awoke at six on the 5th, with many flies buzzing and biting. The morning bright and warm, no wind, bathed off the pier head. Oh, how warm that water was! Then clear up ship and breakfast at 8 a.m., pie, rolls, ham, beef, tea, coffee, all well punished. Then a pipe. The second-class yachts, i.e., those under ten tons, started at 10 a.m. - SLUG, just brought from Rice Lake on the cars, WIDEAWAKE, ZOUAVE, PALMETTO and KITTEN. We then took eight ladies on board, drifted out a little way, then a long rolling swell off the Lake and no wind - so hot! We got in as soon as we could and saw the first class yachts start at 1 p.m. The start was effected in this way. All the competing boats were moored on the lee of the windward pier with their mainsails up in order previously determined by lot. At a given signal their headsails were hoisted and they were towed out by the bystanders. They got off well but the GORILLA being first had the advantage of a little puff of wind and gained a good start on the others, maintaining her lead until the end of the day. The others were the ARROW, JOHN A. MACDONALD, RIVET and DART. There was a light wind from the South. All day the race lasted, the wind at times falling altogether, then exerting itself enough to give a feeble puff for a few minutes, after which it became calm as before. It freshened, however, enough to bring the GORILLA in before the time allotted for the race had elapsed, but died away immediately, leaving the RIVET just outside. Had the breeze lasted ten minutes longer, the RIVET would have saved her time and won the race. The WIDEAWAKE carried off the second class prize."

"The band played on board the JOHN A. as before and we loafed with many ladies on the wharf till they all took themselves off to dress for the ball. Mrs. Stewart, the Misses Hodders, and Miss Coewell arrived by steamer from Toronto and were forthwith conducted to the Globe. Harvey had taken a room there and I dressed in that. I had to go down to the bar to procure a ticket. It was crowded with loafers more or less drunk, smoking, chewing, and spitting like Yankees."

"The ball room was dismal, insufficiently lighted, and papered with dark green and brown; it look like a cavern. The music was bad, the floor was bad and the supper was bad. The girls were good though and that covered nearly all the sins. I was bored into leaving at two. I stood at the door of the hotel talking for a few minutes when I noticed two gentlemen

coming down stairs in each others arms and head foremost. About half way down the undermost hitched his leg in the bannisters and remained in suspense, while the other shooting ahead picked himself up and walked away. Imaging this to be a custom of the country, I remained quiescent and observant. Presently some bystanders disengaged the obfuscated and entangled gentleman and took him into the bar, whence he speedily emerged followed by a fist. This time he fell soft on a group of loafers who scattered in confusion. Much noise and talking but nothing practical ensued so I went home to bed. This was not the only row that night."

"6th August. Could not manage to get up as early as usual this morning. I had, however, my accustomed tumble in off the pier head, and performed my toilette satisfactorily. I was fortunate enough to possess a small bag in two compartments originally intended for shaving tackle but now made to carry brushes and soap. This I slung to a towel and always took with me when I went to bathe. I scrubbed my hands and cleaned my teeth while swimming in the lake and brushing my hair was an agreeable pastime on the road back. When bathing off the yacht we used a tin basin turn and turn about for any soapy ablutions. One small mirror was provided by the commodore and it always turned up providentially on our nearing any port with a town attached to it. Elsewhere it remained perdu as nobody ever looked for it. After bathing this morning, I went to a barbers, got myself shaved, and then joined our party at breakfast at the Globe. Then a pipe and a prowl into town. About midday the ladies gathered to the ship and we ran out some seven miles to the southward to watch the race. It was a good sailing day with plenty of wind and unfortunately a proportionate amount of sea running. Several of the ladies yielded to the weakness of their dear little interiors but we never mention names. Mr. Lanon, Harvey, Woodfull and Dugmore, gathered around the weather shrouds and did vocal melody "an it were any nightingale". The unfortunate RIVET was becalmed between two other boats some few hundred yards on each side of her, both of whom had plenty of wind, so when at last a cat's paw came her way, she put about the returned to port. We soon did the same and disembarked our precious freight."

"Then the Toronto party all dined together at the Globe and spent a very pleasant evening at Judge Boswell's. Music and dancing, strolling on the lawn, and sitting on the steps, very sociable and jolly. About one a.m., we all strolled down to the pier to see Mrs. Parsons off to Toronto. The boat from Kingston came in at two looking very pretty with her long row of cabin lights and coloured lamps on each paddle box. Farewells over, I turned in aboard the BREEZE."

"7th August. Matutinal swim, breakfast at the Globe. The Breezers and ladies from Toronto assembled at Judge Boswell's at eleven. Traps and quadrupeds were collected and we started for Rice Lake. Arthur Boswell, Bogert and I took the last thing on wheels and disappeared. It was a kind of gig drawn by the spectre of a horse who appeared ready to go on his knees every day and beg that twenty four hours more life might be vouchsafed to him. We came up to some others of the party at a public house (or tavern) about halfway, called Cold Springs. To them we accounted for having brought our beast so far

by saying that he luckily fell to pieces near where another of the same class was grazing, so we mended him up with odd bits from this other. The road was pretty and changing its character constantly, now winding along the foot of a hill, now through deep woods, then emerging into open cultivated country with farmhouses scattered about. There was interest enough to carry us through the twelve miles without our feeling bored. It was a blessed hot day, threatening rain now and then but the sun always prevented the clouds carrying out their intention. When we arrived at Gore's Landing we found all assembled in the hotel planning boating expeditions. The greater part of us got on board a small yacht and stood out into the lake. There was a light breeze just rippling the deep blue water. Some thirty miles in length, the lake only averages a breadth of three. It is fed by three good sized streams, the largest of which, the Otonabee, falls into it nearly opposite Gore's Landing. The Trent, its great effluent, runs out of the East end into the Bay of Quinte at Trentport. But the chief beauty of the lake is its islands. I do not know how many there are but they are all very lovely, covered with trees to the water's edge, they show every variety of tint and colour in their foliage, and stand out well from the more distant wooded capes or tawny meadows on the Northern shore. The peculiarity of this lake to English eyes is the wild rice which grows in the deep water and lifts up its pale green feathery head in thick profusion through beds a mile and more in length. Round the islets and across the rice beds we cruised till the wind fell and left us fairly becalmed in a rice bed on our way home. A friendly tow brought us to our mooring and we prepared for dinner noways loth. Three of the party had been fishing and had caught some fine black bass, two of which weighed about 4 lb. Each. The first dish at the dinner table was Maskinonge, the king fish of these lakes. It is more like a gigantic pike than any other English fish. This dish received due attention but did not at all interfere with the rights of those which followed it. The beer was good and plentiful and all things went happily. Then pipes and I made a rough sketch of the lake from the hill by the hotel."

"By this time shawls were being brought out and the horses were put to. Fred Duggan was offered to us in exchange for Bogert who was wanted to make up a quartette in another carriage. We examined the amount of sitting down room required by each of us (three in a gig, you see) and consented. Our dilapidated ground plan of a horse soon fell in rear of the others though we started him with a spurt and by the time we got to Cold Springs it was dark and raining."

"Damp and darker it grew till we could no longer say whether we were on the road or not but had to give the perfidious old beast his way. He, being probably incited thereto by the fresh smell of a hedge or rather creepers over a snake fence, for hedges are not in this country, meandered along till suddenly one wheel went down, the other up, and we found ourselves in a heap on the ground. Having taken a wrong turn on entering Cobourg, it was eleven o'clock before we reached Judge Boswell's. What a lot of tea we continued to drink when we had been wrung out and hung up to dry. At last we were forced to cry hold and I returned to the yacht. On my way down, I looked into the Macpherson's where dancing and generally jollity were going on. Wet, dirty, and tired, I presented myself in the ball room and the very fact of the large patch of mud on my quarter which I thought the worst

part of the business proved my excuse, for an upset story accompanied by such stern evidence covered all my sins, lateness and disreputable dishclout appearance into the bargain."

"It is perfectly marvellous how things that under ordinary circumstances you would never dream of getting into accommodate themselves to all one's personal peculiarities when on a cruise."

"Judge Boswell's coat fitted me à merveille at tea and I was equally at home in one of Jim Macpherson's at the party. After a while, I found myself too limp and tired to be up to the mark so obtained permission to depart. The yacht was some three or four yards from the wharf so I went to the hotel and had a pipe. Then the ladies had to be put on board the steamer for Toronto. It was blowing and there was a pretty heavy sea running out in the lake. Consequently, it was three in the morning when the steamer touched the wharf. No berths could be had but Clarkson and Cobden went off with the ladies and we trusted to them to manage. Just had time to run ashore before the gangway was hauled aboard. Then back to the hotel, loitering a moment to watch the great lights of the steamer in the long slow heave over each wave till they grew less and less and then went behind the thick black veil of darkness and rain."

"8th August. As several of the visitors attracted to Cobourg by the double event of regatta and ball had departed, I easily obtained a bed at the hotel. Not being likely to enjoy one again for some time, I made the most of it, and breakfasted pretty late. It was dead calm. I went down to the harbour and had a pipe. Then Fred Duggan turned up and we watched the drooping flags and motionless clouds. Consulted Burrel but got no hope from anything. There was a wee wee steamer, about as big as an ordinary row-boat close to us. She had crossed the lake from Rochester, where we met again. A small house in which were two apartments was built in her by way of cabin. Aft was the engine and forward two bunks. In the bow a regular flagstaff with the Stars and Stripes floating from it. If four fellows had taken her flag, one at each corner, they could have wrapped the boat in it and carried her off bodily."

"At last we got tired of watching her manoeuvre and concluded to search for the commodore; ran him to earth at Judge Boswell's. We agreed not to go out because there was no wind to take us out, and went through the town in search of tin-ware, fishing tackle, etc., etc. Having bought all we could buy, we marched through the streets carrying kettles and pans in regular procession to the ship. We dined on board at six. By the time our pipes were out, Bogert came down attended by ladies. Then the steamer from Toronto arrived; Bogert was put on board and somehow or other we all found ourselves in sailor costume spending the evening in the Judge's drawing room. That night everyone slept on board."

"9th August. At half past six, we shook ourselves out of our blankets and proceeded to tub. Woodfull and I took the dinghy to the west pier and had a bracing swim in the clear cold

water. While we were dressing and doing toilette, a man having the appearance of a half drunk cobbler arrived accompanied by two small boys. He was very loquacious and inveighed against the uncleanly habits of the Cobourg populace who preferred a basin in their own rooms now and then to a daily swim in the big lake. His own lavatory tendencies he explained by saying he had been a soldier and then gave us many curious and interesting details of the bathing parades at Gibraltar. Furthermore, he informed us that every English soldier was obliged to learn to swim, and that now regular skating parades for the troops were held in Canada during the winter. We were hungry, and preferred breakfast to acquiring more knowledge so wished him good morning and returned to the ship. After breakfast, we warped out of the harbour under sail. The wind was light but steady from the Southwest. Goodby to Cobourg."

The *Cobourg Sentinel* of 1863 reported "Mr. Wallace was the first of our citizens who risked capital in yachting, and to him we are especially indebted for the many pleasant days we enjoyed during the past few years. We congratulate our townspeople on this late addition to our reputation and should they succeed in bringing back that "Prince of Wales Cup" to Cobourg, we assure them their claims to make Cobourg the capital of the Yacht Club cannot be resisted, and their right to have the flag-ship, now in Toronto, removed to Cobourg harbour is indisputable."

Like all towns, Cobourg had its establishment. It appears from the names cited by Baines in the diary that Commodore Hodder was well acquainted with it, and we can readily imagine the good natured, though sharp, awareness he had that his hosts were envious of the position of the R.C.Y.C. Henry and his fellow crewmen, little involved in the jockeying of their betters, would have been delighted with the establishment families they went to see, for most of them had daughters to meet and party with. Thus, "Judge Boswell" (George M. Boswell) mentioned several times, was a County Judge, 54 years of age, with home at Lowwood. Others of the roster from the diary or the newspaper accounts were:

- ➔ **A.G. Boswell** (the "Arthur" of the diary), Barrister, 29 years of age.
- ➔ **H.G. Boswell**, Division Court Clerk, 24, with two servants.
- ➔ **W.J. Stanton**, Solicitor, 23, with three servants. Agent for a large life insurance company.
- ➔ **F.W. Barron**, Headmaster, 48. Daughters Emily and Agnes. Barron was a "jolly, plump, little man, quick-tempered, but warm-hearted and kind". He had a yacht of 14 tons (on Rice Lake?) Archibald Lampman ('the Canadian Keats') was one of his students.
- ➔ **G.S. Daintry**, Gentleman, 48. Daughters Emily and Jane. A singer on occasion, for he is reported at one gathering to have sung "The Fine Old English Gentleman," and the newspaper account went on to characterize him, saying of him that "he himself is a most perfect specimen." Daintry was Lessee (proprietor) of the Cobourg and Peterborough Railway.

- **R.D. Chatterton**, Deputy Clerk of the Crown, 56. Living at Havelock.
- **D.E. Boulton**, Barrister, 44, a Colonel in the militia, with three servants. Daughters Emily and Mary. Boulton was Chairman of the Board of the school of which Barron was head.

The older of these members of the establishment were from England, as were Commodore Hodder and his Royal Artillery crewmen. That they were the establishment is clear from the newspapers of the day; Guillet's scrapbook of clippings recites many of their doings. That they were very English too is also clear - at one dinner it is reported they were served "The Roast Beef of Olde England".

Poor Cobourg! Try as it might, it couldn't overcome geography. Toronto had the protected harbour and the population and the money centres and the politics - everything in short, and the Royal Canadian Yacht Club, that "flag-ship", stayed there safe and secure against Cobourg's machinations.

THE HAZARDS OF THE LAKE

"Lake Ontario is a noble sheet of water on a calm summer day, blue with the deep ultramarine of the Mediterranean, changing in a fresh breeze to bright sunny green, with drifting purple cloud shadows, and as the gale grows fierce rising into the power of black blue waves crested with flashing white foam. It is hardly in any one aspect distinguishable from the outer sea." Those words, with which Baines started his diary, will bring an emotional response from all who have sailed the lake. They also establish Baines as an observant man with pronounced artistic leanings.

The month of August 1863 was a difficult one for boats on Lake Ontario, whether large or small, and BREEZE had its share of those difficulties. Here is what was recorded in BREEZE on August 11: *"At about five o'clock pm, we were nearly off Long Point, the wind was steady and there was nothing to do. All at once, the sky clouded over to the South West. We watched it earnestly and it soon became evident that a pretty heavy squall was coming up. We took in the jib and double reefed the mainsail. One squall passed astern of us towards the North East. After a very short consultation, the mainsail was lowered and hurriedly stopped. Then the wind fell nearly calm. All the sky was dark with a strange blue tint over it. First drifted above us a long line of pale gray clouds with broken streaming edges. Then out of the South West burst three flashes of lightning flooding the whole sky with intense brilliancy. While our eyes were still dazzled with the flare of the last, the squall burst over us. <There was> a sudden violent gust of wind then <a> steady hard blow with thick streaming rain. We knew well enough that coats were useless so met it in shirts and trousers only, barefooted too. It deluged us at once. The wind was so violent that we could not keep our faces to it. The dark lake changed to a pale gray with the crests of the waves marked in broad lines of dull blue. Everything on board was snug and fast, Burrell at the helm. We drove through the water under our foresail sheeted down close at a grand*

pace. We made a stout rope fast to the dinghy and paid out some five or six fathoms that she might be clear of our counter. Harder and harder it blew and still we drove before it. A large schooner away to the southward caught it hot and heavy. She let go everything but the fore staysail with a run and kept the same course as ourselves."

"Presently the sea got up, following us at first in short broken waves, which by degrees grew into long regular masses of dull green water like billows at sea. The dinghy was terribly tossed about. At last a wave slewed her on one side, the painter slackened, then tautened suddenly. The staple was torn out and our poor little boat was left alone on the wild sea to shift for herself. The first fury of the squall was now spent but it still blew a gale and the sea grew heavier. From North, South, and East, the lightning flashed incessantly, <and> overhead the thunder crashed at short intervals. All the sky was black except one very beautiful break to the west ward: a clear space amongst the clouds orange golden over the blue trees of Prince Edward, reddening upwards to the bright edges of the storm rack beneath which the broad shield of the sun floated in a narrow space of pure white light. Over against this stretched the full arc of a perfect double rainbow..."

"The squall was heavy on the lake. The steamer from Toronto unable to make Cobourg ran on to Kingston. The BANSHEE from Kingston put back with her bulwarks carried away. Off Port Hope, the RIVET lost her mast and with difficulty got into Cobourg half full of water."

August in 1863 was a bad time for storms on the lake. The one just described occurred on August 11. On the 20th, the 22nd, and 24th, they again experienced very bad weather; their second dinghy, acquired in Kingston, was lost on the 20th. The storm of the 22nd resulted in the loss of the schooner FLEETWING off Cobourg. She overturned when struck by a squall, drowning the Captain's wife, child, and steward.

On the 24th, they took off early, after an austere breakfast; Baines' account of the morning is short: *"We all rose at five. It was blowing pretty fresh so we decided on breakfasting at our moorings. Eggs and a biscuit and a half a piece were ready at seven. At eight o'clock, we were underway carrying the storm jib and two reefs down in the mailsail. When outside, we found the wind was south south west and not so fresh as we had expected. Then we set the topsail. It blew harder as we got on and we took two reefs in the mainsail and set the storm jib again. By this time, we had got past Pultneyville, a small village which struck me as being rather a good type of those generally seen along the lake and I made a sketch of it accordingly."*

"To the northward of us was a propeller who did not appear to be making good weather of it. When on our gaining tack we rather 'whipped' her but we lost again when we stretched inshore, which was occasionally necessary as the wind was against us." BREEZE encountered other boats and ships rather frequently on the lake. Says the diarist "Many a huge steamer built in tiers like the Tower in Babel in old pictures, churns up the blue water, leaving a broad pale foam track as it rushes from port to port. Many a tall white

schooner bears to Eastern marts the wheat of Michigan or corn from the waving plains of far Wisconsin. In rough unwieldy rafts the massive logs of pine and cedar from the depths of many a dark Canadian forest journey slowly to be broken up under the classic heights of Quebec; and amongst all these flits from time to time some trim clean-sailed yacht, like a bright careless butterfly hovering in the midst of the busy respectable denizens of a farm yard".

On a stroll at Oswego he reports: "*Woodfull, Harvey and I pursued our peregrinations to the end of the wharf whence we counted twelve schooners leaving the harbour at nearly the same hour.*" Many such schooners, returning to Oswego in storming conditions, failed to make the entrance and ended on the rocks.

VISITING AMERICAN PORTS IN TIME OF WAR

After stops in Kingston and Prince Edward County, BREEZE visited various American ports - Sackets Harbor, Oswego, Sodus, and Charlotte (Rochester). To see into the depths of the diary's records of those ports, remember the diarist's background. The important facts are that he was an officer in the Royal Artillery, and was stationed at Fort York in Toronto.

Canadian newspapers of the day were full of news of the war going on in the land to the south. The *Globe* reported on it regularly in detail on the front page, under the banner "The American Revolution", The *Leader* under "The American War." Dispatches, reports, letters, editorials, were endless in their examinations. We can imagine that talk and chatter in the messes of Fort York in Toronto, the examination of professional matters, the rumours - and the possibility of involvement.

Baines was in Toronto because of the threat from the south. In 1861, the British mail steamship TRENT had been stopped on the Atlantic by an American warship, and two Confederate diplomats taken from her. One of many consequences of the big hoorah that followed was the strengthening and extension of the defences of Fort York, including the addition of seven heavy artillery pieces. To serve those guns properly, several brigades of the Royal Artillery were posted from England and newly stationed at Fort York, and Baines arrived. As mentioned earlier, the Royal Artillery was an elite regiment, and considered by its officers as the elite of the elite. All the rest of the world were much lower in the scale of worth and value, especially the Yankees.

The contemporary concern about the American threat was soundly based, it seemed, for loud and marshall sounds, with much breast-beating, did emanate from various American quarters, repeatedly. Said the *Globe* editorially on August 1 "*...many good people are greatly exercised by the threats of the New York Herald that when the war is over, the Republic will proceed to polish off England and France.*"

What is a good and loyal officer of the Royal Artillery to think, what to do, in a climate of such a kind, one that promises that his professional abilities may soon be called on? Even on leave, Henry responded, though gently. Passing the exposed railway line on the shores of the lake just out of Toronto, he sees and writes that "*enterprising Yankees*" could do it in with little trouble. "*A moonlight night, a spade, and a bag of gunpowder are all they want,*" says he.

Henry wasn't finished; cruising amongst the despised Yankees provided opportunity for another role, as spy. Much of what he reports at Sackets Harbor can be seen in this light, in addition to that of the ordinary tourist's curiosity.

Apart from his spying, here is some of what he had to say about Sackets: "*We found ourselves anchored nearly in the centre of a wretched little harbour lined with rotten quays and rotting vessels. One large schooner on the stocks and another smaller one newly launched were the only signs of real shipping about the place. On our left as we entered the harbour was a big barrack on high ground. Remains of a breastwork along the edge of the low cliffs here and there gave it the semblance of being fortified, but we saw no guns. In front was the town, and on the right the wharf with the ship house and behind it a small promontory with a few good houses on it. As soon as we had made ourselves decent we proceeded ashore. The Custom House was opposite us and we landed just below it. To our left was what appeared to be a guard house from the number of soldiers lounging about. A long-haired round-shouldered dirty set of fellows they seemed. The Customs office was shut up, but a contiguous loafer 'guessed the officer was to the hotel'. This being close by we proceeded thither and found a big square house with solid-er-pervaded verandah, but no excise officer. Up and down the single street of Sackets Harbor we searched for a butcher, all in vain! One store labelled 'Meat Shop' we came upon but it was closed. A fearfully dreary place it seemed to be, two thirds of the shops shut and no one in the remaining ones. All over the town, clustering in knots at the hotel, loafing, chewing, and liquoring, we found soldiers. They belonged to a corps being raised in the country whose headquarters are at the barracks on the hill. Their costume consisted of black felt hat looped up on one side with black feathers on the other, and gilt cross muskets in front, blue jacket with yellow braid and blue trousers with yellow stripes. Pink stripes we saw too but I am inclined to think they were not regimental. Their boots were of many patterns and some wore spurs. They were called the McClellan Cavalry, but were not horsed as yet. Saving these we hardly saw a man in the street and but very few women. Nothing approaching to a lady. The attractions of the town were soon exhausted. The hotel, large, dirty and bad, produced no beer.*"

At the end of the War of 1812, fifty years earlier, the Americans had had a big ship a'building at Sackets; she was the U.S. NEW ORLEANS, a very big ship indeed, as she was intended to carry 120 guns. At war's end, she was not yet finished, and the Rush Bagot Treaty proscribed such vessels on the Lakes. Despite the treaty and following their old precept - "*Trust in God and keep your powder dry*" - the Americans kept their big ship against an evil day Who knew when she would be needed again! A big house or shed

was built over her against that future need. The Happy Warriors from the yacht BREEZE visited the big ship in its big house, climbing the ladders alongside the ship. In doing so, they got out their pen-knives surreptitiously and tested the timbers. Says the diarist "*I carefully stuck my knife into occasional timbers and satisfied myself that she was not good for much. She is in fact rotting from old age.*"

While at Sackets, too, they made a tour of the Fort, talking at length with some of the officers. Baines' military observations were primarily that there were sufficient guns facing the sea to "*secure the harbour against any attack by sea*", but that other guns were "*totally unserviceable.*" At Oswego too, he had comments about the Fort, albeit brief, and not as thorough as a really good spy would have made them. I can imagine him, rather satisfied with his findings, reporting them to his superiors on return to Fort York, though I expect they were well known to the responsible authorities anyway!

AN UNHAPPY DAY AND END OF THE CRUISE

Going on, they came to Charlotte, the port of Rochester, and lay there for a day. The diarist's account of how he stowed his clothes under his mattress was brought to a point on the arrival in Charlotte. Says he "*At three o'clock we had moored alongside a low wharf just below the railroad station and steamboat moorings. Having made the ship snug, I proceeded to get out my best and only decent suit of clothes, which had been stowed away under my mattress as before described. I was much pleased at discovering that a bottle of varnish kept in the adjoining locker had broken from its moorings during our recent tossing and streaming through the intervening bulkhead had thoroughly saturated my coat and, not to put too fine a point upon it, pants. Of course, my hands were covered too as well as whatever else was in the neighbourhood of the locker. The varnish was an oily black liquid used for the stays and ironwork of the ship.*"

Despite the disaster, they had a great time sight-seeing in Rochester. Then it was off across the lake to home and the diary's last words "*The cruise was over.*"

THE DIARIST'S LAST DAYS

By 1865, the military threat posed by the United States had receded, and there was no further need at Fort York for Baines and many of his fellow artillery officers and men. He left to join the garrison at Quebec City, taking passage as far as Montreal in the passenger vessel MAGNET. Baines wrote a poem, a nostalgic bit of doggerel, about this end to his sojourn at Toronto. It was in some degrees prophetic, as he wrote the words "*No more for me the breeze may blow.*" He was soon to die. Leaving Toronto on board the MAGNET, 23 May 1865, he wrote,

*"Far back the low smoke trailing lies,
Back streams the broad white foam,
And backwards still I strain my eyes
Toward our three years home.*

*A black streak on the clear calm sky,
White on the deep blue lake -
'Twixt lake and sky thoughts backward fly,
From foam below, from cloud on high
Their two-fold hue they take.*

*Through dark regret for all I leave,
For hands I clasp no more,
There gleam fresh hopes my fancies weave
For all that lies below.*

*No more for me the breeze may blow,
From sky so clear, o'er lake so blue,
Perchance I n'er again shall know
A life so calm with friends so true.*

*As in those years that ran their sand,
In bright grains dropping day by day
Where fair Toronto lines the strand
With masts and spires far away.*

*So far away, and now more far,
Still farther growing - fading still,
The lake verge rises like a bar
'Twixt me and them - they fade until*

*They die in distance and the sky,
Rests all unbroken on the lake -
Three years die with them - so, Goodbye
New life begins as old links break.*

*But still where'er my fate may lead,
By Indian palms or dear home shore,
No quiet dreams at even fall,
Old forms will rise - old voices call;
The past will claim my heart and ah!
The dear old time be mine once more."*

"*He was soon to die,*" I reported above. He did so on October 27, 1866, in the General Hospital Convent of Quebec City. On Sunday morning of October 14, when a serious fire was threatening Quebec City, military and naval units were called out, Baines amongst them. He led a demolition crew, attempting to establish firebreaks. In one building, premature ignition of the charge resulting in serious injuries to Baines and his sergeant. Lovingly nursed by sisters of the General Hospital Convent, he developed tetanus and died in their care. His death led to an explosion of grief, public and private. There was a great public funeral with a major procession of all local dignitaries and authorities, and a large monument was erected in his honour in the cemetery. To this day, his picture delivered by his best friend, Lieutenant Harvey, hangs in the Hospital Convent and Sister Cloutier has written me, saying "*Je puis vous dire que son souvenir s'est perpetué en notre communauté jusqu'a ce jour*"."

We know a little of the future of Baines' fellow officers in BREEZE, those Happy Warriors. Woodfull went on to another fifteen years as a surgeon in the Artillery. Baines best friend, Lieutenant Harvey, rose over the following 26 years to be Lieutenant Colonel, having served in various parts of the Victorian British Empire. I'm sure he never forgot his friend, Baines, nor the cruise of the Yacht BREEZE with its high jinks and happy days at Cobourg.

SOURCES

- "A Month's Leave; or The Cruise of the Breeze", a diary authored by H.E. Baines, in the National Archives in Ottawa.
- Contemporary newspapers of Toronto and Cobourg, in the Metropolitan Toronto Reference Library.
- Papers in the General Hospital Convent in Quebec City.
- Papers in the possession of Arthur Boddington of Toronto.
- Archives of the Royal Canadian Yacht Club.
- Archives of the Cobourg and District Historical Society.

A NOTE OR TWO

The Baines Diary has over twenty watercolour and half a dozen black-ink sketches. Slides showing some of these were presented at the talk.

In editing the Baines Diary for present-day audiences and readers, a problem arises similar to that facing publishers of some of Shakespeare's work. Should language offensive to the present times be retained or not? In the Diary, Baines speaks in a belittling way of women, of black people, and perhaps of others. In this transcript of 1995 talk about BREEZE, I have chosen to retain Baines words as he wrote them. The implied views that result from this are Baines', not mine.

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WORLD WAR II: A WOMAN'S VIEW BY KAY MANN

In 1941, Canada had her first enlisted women in this nation's history. This came about because of dwindling manpower reserves and the incessant pressure from an embryo women's volunteer corps. The government and a reluctant army agreed to let women serve in supportive roles in the military.

These first women had to fight two battles when they said they were going to enlist. The first was with their families and boyfriends and the other was trying to serve what at times seemed to be a chauvinistic employer.

During World War I, Canadian women served as nursing sisters and in various civilian capacities by the Canadian army but never as part of the army itself.

The first women to be assigned duty in mainland Europe landed in Naples, Italy on June 22, 1944.

There were CWAC in England during 1942 doing all manner of jobs from working in the laundry, drivers, mechanics, switchboard operators, cooks, office workers and, of course, professionals, such as medical and dental staff.

Athene, goddess of war, was the emblem of the CWAC and the helmeted head decorated the button and lapel insignia on the khaki uniforms.

A comment in *Khaki*, the army magazine, about the training centre of Vermilion, Alberta, said "*that fabulous place where guppies had to clean the soles of their shoes but slept in the same sheets for a month, closed in May, 1944.*"

I never, in my wildest dreams, thought that I would join the army but a request made by a friend one day changed my whole life. My friend, who was 18 to my 16, said she was going into Vancouver to join the army and asked me to come with her. I asked her why she would want to join something where they women wore such terrible coloured stockings. I had seen two army gals just before that and they had olive green lisle stockings which I thought were dreadful.

Well, she coaxed me to go with her and before we left the recruiting building, I had joined the army and my friend still hadn't been accepted as she had had a childhood disease that may have had repercussions. I left for basic training (30 days) in Vermilion, Alberta, and she still hadn't been accepted (she finally did get in).

After my training, I returned to Vancouver Barracks to work on the information desk until I joined the pipe band, one of the ten originals. My parents were Scottish and one of my

sisters was a highland dancer so we always travelled to the highland games so she could compete. Whenever I heard the pipe band, I was always interested in the drums, so when I heard that one of the girls in the barracks was taking drumming lessons, I felt this was my chance to learn.

When the pipe major was looking for girls for the band, she heard that I was taking drumming lessons and made arrangements for me to join the band. That was the luckiest day of my army life as it began the formation of friendships which have lasted for 50 years and the opportunity to travel extensively at the cost of the government.

It was a hectic life which didn't leave us much free time as we toured across Canada twice, three weeks in Pennsylvania as part of their War Loan Bond drive and then almost six months in England and Europe. We met many important people in our travels and ate army food. During all of this time, when food was rationed, we were served lovely roast beef dinners with all of the fixings which makes me think that many of the Ladies Auxiliaries must have pooled their food coupons in order to feed us.

The occasion that stands out in my mind was when we played in Paris in 1945. We slow marched around the Arc de Triomphe and played the *Road to the Isles* 22 times. We then marched down the Champs Elysees apparently watched by 25,000 people. We then played in the Tuilleries Gardens for then Ambassador to Paris, General and Mrs. George Vanier, whose daughter was in the CWAC who were then stationed in Paris. We were later entertained at a cocktail party in their residence. That was my red letter day.

We were stationed in Apeldoorn, Holland and travelled all around Holland from there. We also went to Paris and Belgium and we played for the Canadian troops in Germany who were awaiting transport back to Canada. We then left the continent and gave concerts in England for a short while.

While we were overseas, I had the opportunity of spending some time with my grandparents in the north of Scotland which had been a childhood dream of mine.

Before disbanding, we agreed to have a yearly newsletter which we still have today. We didn't have our first reunion for about 30 years, as we were all bringing up children and paying mortgages, etc. Our first and second reunions were in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan where one of our former pipers lived. Every two years since, we have had a reunion from Toronto to Victoria and several in Oklahoma as one of our drummers was an American. This year's get together will be in Victoria in May.

This is much more than I was able to tell your members that night as I was limited as to time, but I thought you might like it for your memory book.

WORLD WAR II: A WOMAN'S VIEW BY MARION HAGEN

This is the first for me - talking before an audience about my six weeks of work at Eldorado in Port Hope in May - June 1943.

I can't claim any scientific bent or background, or any particular sense of patriotic duty at the time. I needed money. This is the way it came about.

I had lived in Brockville and had gone to McMaster University from Brockville Collegiate in September 1939. My parents, however, moved from Brockville to Port Hope in 1941 and so I visited them there whenever I had any vacation time (Christmas, Easter, etc.). When I graduated in 1943, I wanted to further prepare myself for my year at OCE by attending the University of Western Ontario summer school at Trois Pistoles in Quebec. My degree was in French and English.

My parents said they would pay my tuition costs for summer school, but I would have to earn my travel, food, and lodging expenses. I had six weeks to earn my needed funds before the course began in July. My family lived in Barrett's Terrace and in the next house in the Terrace lived a pleasant young family by the name of Ross. Mr. Ross was the head of the Eldorado operation in Port Hope and he generously agreed that I could work for a six week period, and then leave for Quebec.

Thus it was that on the afternoon of May 18, 1943, I arrived at the guard's gatehouse at Eldorado, passed through, punched the time clock and began my first shift. I was met by my foreman, who showed me the layout of the main building, lunchroom with lockers, etc., and then I was taken down to a lower level where there were several blast furnaces in a large high ceilinged room. I was shown how to put a bright yellow margarine-like substance in round ceramic cylinders by means of a kind of spatula. These cylinders were then placed in wire racks and shoved into the extreme heat of the gas furnaces. I don't remember how long they stayed in the heat, it was not a lengthy time, but while we waited, we walked to the open door next to the harbour to cool off. We wore asbestos gauntlets and eye goggles to protect our bodies when putting in and taking out the trays.

When the trays came out, the yellow substance had turned to ash, and we dumped that into a bin. That was what was important for later use.

This procedure continued for 3 days and then it was suddenly announced to us that the superintendent didn't think it was fit work for women, and we were stationed elsewhere in the building.

Before I go any further, I must tell you a funny thing that happened the second day of my work. I had attended my graduation ceremony at McMaster on May 17 - everyone in his

or her best bib and tucker, which meant for the girls, long white dresses, academic gown and mortarboard, flowers and all. The chancellor of McMaster at that time was Dr. George P. Gilmour, who granted us our degrees that day.

Two days later, on the 19th of May, I was walking along John St., carrying my lunch pail, towards the plant when who should come into sight but Dr. Gilmour, who it turned out, putting in time before catching a train which used to run from Port Hope to Lindsay. He was certainly amazed to see my change of dress!

The work which we women were moved to was very passive and boring, and much cooler. In various parts of the plant, there were enormous vats containing thousands of gallons of chemicals, water, acids and goodness knows what. We certainly didn't know what it was all about but these vats had to be monitored, levels of liquid maintained, something added or subtracted. We could sit for this work most of the time.

As one would expect, there were occasional slip ups when something went wrong. I'm horrified now to think that on one occasion I was responsible for an overflow which caused the air to fill with a steamy acrid vapour, and the men on the shift had to get out the hoses and sluice down the floor and walkways. That meant that everything flowed down into the harbour. It must be a very polluted place of course, but at that time, I think people believed that water carries bad things away and acts as a purifier.

As for the work force at the time, the foremen were men and the women were mostly older women whose husbands were overseas or away in training. I certainly stuck out like a sore thumb! We didn't know how the work fitted into the war effort, but we did know it was war work. Only much later did we learn that we were preparing elements of the famous or infamous Manhattan project in the USA at Los Alamos for the making of the atomic bomb.

At that time, Port Hope felt lucky to have such a busy industry, providing employment in the community. When I read now of the endless controversy over getting rid of the radioactive materials dumped as landfill around sites in Port Hope and surrounding territory, I think what a different world it is today. We know what the bomb did to the world, and we know the controversy which still surrounds its use. We all demand to know more details of what our governments are up to. In war time, we accepted secrecy as necessary to our survival, and we were so naive.

I looked up the word *eldorado* in the dictionary to see what definitions are given. One of them is "*Any place of great riches or fabulous opportunity.*" Well, I earned the necessary money for my summer at Trois Pistoles, but maybe it's better that the name has been changed to Cameco. We see things differently today.

**WORLD WAR II: A WOMAN'S VIEW
REMINISCENCES OF A WAR BRIDE - 50 YEARS LATER
BY KASS WHITEFIELD**

I would like you to imagine for a moment that you have been travelling for two weeks by train, by boat and then again by train for two nights and at 5:00 a.m., you are awakened in your upper berth by the porter. He tells you to be ready to leave the train at 7:00 a.m. and you know that you will be meeting your in-laws for the first time.

I was one of 2,646 war brides and children who arrived in Halifax over the weekend of March 2/3, 1946 in three ships, docking one after another, the *Aquitania*, the *Scythia* and the *Letitia*. I travelled aboard the *Letitia*, a war-time hospital ship. Canadian servicemen serving overseas in World War II had met and married some 48,000 women, mostly from Great Britain. There are many fascinating stories of how boy met girl, and how some of them married having known each other for a very short time. That only happened at the beginning of the war for by the time we married in 1943, it was necessary for the serviceman to get permission from his commanding officer and follow certain procedures, such as, making sure there was not already a wife back home, and seeing that there was enough money put aside for the wife's passage to Canada. Actually, the Canadian Government was more than generous, as the travel was very well organized and at no cost to the husband whatsoever.

Our story is not unusual - I met Jim in March 1942 at a dance put on by the ladies of the local Women's Institute, held every Friday for the regiment stationed nearby. I was a member of the Women's Land Army, living and working with five other girls on the estate of Lord Stanhope in Kent, just south of London.

We were there to help run his farm as most of the young men were on war service, so every Friday night, we rode our bicycles into the village for our big night out - curfew was 10:00. The regiments stayed only a short while, and moved on, not one of us was looking for any long term relationship.

However, Jim seemed to keep turning up and we were engaged on Hallowe'en in 1942, at that time I didn't see anything incongruous about that because we were used to celebrating Guy Fawkes night on November 5 and All Hallows was a religious observance.

We went through all the required procedures, including my mother's permission as I was under 21 (Hard on her as my Dad was overseas). When Jim broke the news to his parents, they were disappointed as they had urged him to seek out a Scottish girl!

We were married in March 1943, spent quite a bit of our honeymoon in the backyard bomb shelter of my home in Ipswich on the east coast. When Jim had leave that summer, we were too busy harvesting for me to take time off, so Jim became a hired hand and helped

reap the harvest (he was well paid too as they were pleased to have a strong energetic worker).

His regiment left for Italy in October of that year and he returned to England just before VE Day, 1945. By that time, I had left the Land Army and was living in Ipswich (about 70 miles from London). He was off to Holland for a few months, and then returned to Canada in September 1945.

Of course, I was anxious to join him, the Canadian Department of National Defence had set up a Canadian Wives Bureau in London to organize the transportation of wives and children to Canada. I made many trips there to plead my case, but I discovered I was low on the points scale, as I had no small children and I was not pregnant. But my solitary status and my persistence did pay off in the end as after many months of waiting, I received a frantic call to be ready to leave in two days. It seemed that three of the pregnant women planning to travel were found to be too far along in their pregnancy, so I and two other childless and unpregnant wives got their chance!

What a rush for my parents to help me pack up and get to London - and when I did get to London, I was billeted with many other girls and their children in a boarded up hotel for two days before going by train to Liverpool and boarding the S.S. *Letitia*. Unlike the food we have been served in the hotel and on the train, the food on board was like something we had not seen for years. However, as soon as we entered the Irish Sea, my stomach went up and down too and for some reason I lost interest in the roast pork the crew told us we would be having for dinner. I soon got over the seasickness, and really enjoyed crossing which was good for that time of year (February). The time passed quickly helping some of the young mothers and playing with the children in the playroom. I really felt sorry for some of those small children and I'm sure the morning sickness of the mothers-to-be was no fun either. I was thankful not to be one of them.

The ship stayed at anchor in Halifax harbour for a day and a half taking our turn to dock, then on a Monday night, I boarded the train that would be my home for two more days - though some of my fellow passengers would not reach their destination for much longer. Another reason to give thanks! Most of that two days I remember as looking out a bleak, snow-covered landscape and I was really ready for that 5:00 a.m. wake-up call, and just hoped that I got my stocking seams straight, and not too much lipstick.

I was looking forward to meeting my husband's family, as we had corresponded regularly for three years, and I already loved them. I got off the train in Cobourg with two other girls, and I just had eyes for my tall good-looking husband, the first time I had seen him in "civvies", although he had sent me a snapshot of him in his new duds! He introduced me to his Mum and Dad, his Dad's boss, Dick Parker of General Foods, who had driven them to the station. Then I met the four younger members of the family who still lived at home - they all had beaming smiles, probably because they were allowed to stay a day off school to meet their new sister-in-law.

We sat down to a scrumptious breakfast of sausage and egg, and then in bright sunshine I had the tour of the farm (6 acres) and became acquainted with Goldie the family cow. The three of us who arrived in Cobourg that day from England made the front page of the *Cobourg Sentinel Star* - it must have been a "slow news day" and for years I kept that clipping of a picture of me serving my husband tea.

I did receive a warm reception in more ways than one, as even though the weather was quite mild, my new family stoked up the furnace to make sure I didn't feel the cold. Little did they know how uncomfortable that warm bedroom was, the first time in my life I had ever slept in a heated bedroom. Jim had to go down to the basement for tools to open the storm window to get me some fresh air.

I fell in love with Cobourg, but only stayed a few days, as Jim had purchased a small grocery store in Toronto - after five years in the army it seemed he wanted to be his own boss. I must admit to being a bit puzzled, as I had thought he wanted to take up farming - after all, I was an experienced hand. But instead I became a grocery clerk, and no sooner had I got started that he informed me that he had taken a job across the road at the Concrete Pipe Plant, and I would be on my own. I had a little difficulty with the money, however, sometimes I gave a quarter instead of a nickel in the change - but I soon realized that dollars and cents were much easier to work with than pounds, shillings and pence.

We lived in a new suburb with small new homes of returned service - men and their families, and it was a good life - very busy - too busy for me to be homesick. I loved serving the children who would be holding notes from their mothers, sometimes a change purse, and at first I had a hard time making them understand when I asked "do you have a purse?" in my English way of saying it and they enjoyed making a bit fun of me. The older children would call up and say "do you have pop on ice?" and when I assured them we had, they would say "let him out, he'll freeze to death". One day I had a call from supposedly the Bell Telephone - the caller said they were checking the lines, so would I stand back from the phone and whistle. Gullible me, I did, only to be told "that's fine, we will send 10 lbs. of bird seed next week".

My cooking improved gradually, I was glad to have a booklet from the government with household hints, recipes, etc. The favourite ones which I use to this day were lemon pie, pumpkin pie and scalloped potatoes - Mum had not taught me to make them.

Then something happened which would change our lives forever for three years to the day, from when I had arrived in Cobourg, we became parents of twins, a boy and a girl. I was delighted when Jim decided that Toronto was no place to raise these precious babies, so in May, 1950, we moved to Cobourg, having purchased the house from his Mum and Dad where I first stayed in Canada. By that time, I had become more or less Canadianized and felt very much at home. I loved living so close to the lake and I still do.

One of the hymns we sang at our wedding was "*Lead Us Heavenly Father Lead Us*" and that helped set the tone for our marriage. We knew that we were in God's hands, whether we were together or apart. We don't think that we met by chance, we think that this was God's plan for us - otherwise, why would Jim persist in writing to me when two letters to him from me went astray (found later in my young brother's coat pocket)?

What some may look at as a chance meeting led for us to a lifetime of happiness.

COBOURG AND THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR BY KAREN WALKER

In the spring of 1861, Cobourg was gloomy. A cold winter was just leaving Lake Ontario, the last ice of the season melting on the beach, and the lakeshore winds slowly warming but in proud old Cobourg, there seemed very little to look forward to.

Such melancholy was new. Born and raised on ambition and optimism, Cobourg had risen from one lonely cabin on the edge of a swamp to the fifth largest town in the province in only forty years.

But in the late 1850s, as a recession spread across Canada, Cobourg's traditional good fortune began to slip. The harbour went into decline and the town struggled beneath the weight of enormous debt arising from several expensive projects, including the erection of Victoria Hall and the development of the now failed Cobourg-Peterborough Railway.

One of the few sunny prospects left in the midst of this gloom was Cobourg's old partnership across the lake. A flourishing trade had long existed between Cobourg and the Lake Ontario ports of northern New York State, the most important of which was the city of Rochester. For more than thirty years, lumber, livestock, and agricultural produce went south while machinery and other manufactured goods came north. Many in Cobourg hoped that this reliable profitable old trade would sustain the town through the hard times that had come.

But in that grim spring of 1861, as Cobourg looked south, it found its American partner distracted. In a long standing dispute over states' rights, eleven Southern states had recently seceded from the United States and proclaimed themselves the Confederate States of America. Tensions continued to rise between this new rebel nation and what remained of the Union until war broke out on April 12, 1861. Men north and south rushed to enlist when early that morning Confederate artillery bombarded Fort Sumter, a small Union outpost on an island in the harbour of Charleston, South Carolina.

Cobourg was anxious when it heard about the outbreak of the "Second American Revolution." There was concern about what the war would do to the lake trade and how Canada, and specifically Cobourg, would be affected. But as months passed with no further word of hostilities, the worriers started to joke and some even grew impatient with the lack of action on the American front.

On July 21, 1861, the waiting came to an end. Along Bull Run Creek in northeastern Virginia, a large Union army met a smaller Confederate force and throughout the long hot day, the Northern troops held the upper hand. Then, as Southern reinforcements arrived, the tide began to turn. The Confederates rallied as Union forces fell apart. By evening, this first battle of the Civil War had become a rout. Exhausted and disgraced, thousands

of Northern soldiers dragged themselves back to nearby Washington in what was long remembered as "The Great Skedaddle".

In the shameful days that followed Bull Run, President Abraham Lincoln called for one hundred thousand more soldiers and changed their term of enlistment from three months to three years. It was now clear to all that the American Civil War would not end easily or soon.

As the great American industrial machine was fired up for war, waves began to fall upon the already depressed Canadian shore. Timber that had for years found an eager market in New York became harder to sell now. As the supply of Southern cotton dried up, cloth and clothing rose in price. Paper became increasingly expensive too and there was much local grumbling when one of the town's newspapers, the *Cobourg Sentinel*, was forced to raise its subscription rate from \$1.00 to \$1.50 a year.

Even more disturbing than the rise of prices was the disappearance of the lake steamers. Many of the American and Canadian ships that had called at Cobourg back in the prosperous 1850s were now being sold off to the Union navy.

The United States, that old trading partner and friend, was proving to be a disappointment. In the opinion of many, the Americans and their war were making already tough times even worse. Frustration grew and blame for the whole situation began to settle on the Civil War and specifically on the side that people here knew, the North. Grumbling about the cowardice that Union soldiers had shown at Bull Run, the flamboyant *Cobourg Sentinel* soon held the United States responsible for virtually all of the town's woes. The rival *Cobourg Star* disagreed. It supported the Union and even the war because it believed that this was the road to freedom for the slave.

Adding to this mix were some shocking stories. It seemed that Canadians were being kidnapped and forced into the Union army. Praying upon the unwary, crooked army recruiters were enticing men across the border, then drugging and enlisting them. Their victims were mostly young, many of them only teenagers. Some reluctant soldiers quickly deserted while others, like 15 year old Samuel Tillotson of Bowmanville, stayed and waited for help. Samuel languished in the Army of the Potomac for months until his determined mother was finally able to secure his release.

Such stories were true but they clouded the reality that most Canadians in the American Civil War were in it voluntarily. Although enlisting in a foreign war was illegal under British law, upwards of 40,000 Canadians signed up. The vast majority of them served the North. Some went because they had a heartfelt belief in the reasons why the war was being fought. Others sought glory and adventure and many more joined simply because they wanted a job that paid \$13 or more a month.

Southern Ontario was full of army recruiters and attracted by this area's high unemployment and proximity to the United States, Cobourg probably had more than its fair share. Little is known about local men who joined up but one was Dr. William Herriman, a descendant of one of the town's first settlers. Another was young Edward Dodds of Hope Township. In July 1864, at Ashby's Gap Virginia, Dodds would earn the American Congressional Medal of Honour when he carried his wounded captain to safety through enemy fire.

Beyond Cobourg's own hill of beans, there was by this spring of 1862, increasing tension between Great Britain and the United States. Britain along with France were pondering how and indeed if they should enter the bloody conflict across the Atlantic. Some Europeans favoured offering mediation. Others proposed actually recognizing the Confederate States as a nation.

The Union bristled at the threat of foreign interference and Canada, caught into the middle between the powers, shifted nervously. Along the St. Lawrence and Great Lakes frontier, there were calls for improved defences and for the recruitment of more home militia. Toronto, which was thought to be a likely target for attack, was promised a new artillery battery and plans were drawn up to sink ships to block its harbour.

The *Cobourg Star* did not believe an American invasion likely but the *Sentinel* did. It complained that Cobourg was as strategic a target as any place in Canada West and yet the town was receiving neither funds to build defences nor even any real official concern for the threat. What Cobourg needed were cannons! To fend off one of the largest navies in the world, the *Sentinel* felt that four would be enough. Such views spiced up the newspaper's editorial column but they did little to promote action, even here at home. Recruitment for the Cobourg militia, that brave force that would march out to face the enemy remained slow.

On the evening of Thursday, July 3, 1862, *The Maple Leaf* steamed into Cobourg harbour right on schedule. Built at Gananoque in 1850 but now American owned and based, *The Maple Leaf* was one of the few steamers left on Lake Ontario. On this particular night, as the ship approached the town pier, crew and passengers could hear a strange din rising over the still sunset bay.

Earlier that day, Robert Standly, a wealthy gentleman farmer, had married Marion Pringle, refined young lady. St. Peter's Church had been crowded to overflowing and those who could not squeeze inside trampled the lawn outside to watch the social event of the year. As the wedding party departed, it was announced to the crowd that Mr. and Mrs. Standly wished to share their joy with the town and so had paid to open the local bars to all. A great cheer went up. With at least six taverns in the downtown area, there was little waiting for those eager to toast the happy couple.

The party had been raging for hours by the time *The Maple Leaf* docked at 7:00 p.m. Among the passengers hurrying down to join it for the return trip to Rochester was the Cobourg Brass Band. Professor Chalpauka and his musicians had been hired to entertain onboard the ship for a Fourth of July excursion the next day. As it marched through town, the little band began to play. The revellers in nearby taverns heard and drawn by the music, one hundred or more spilled into the streets and followed the band down to where the American steamer was waiting.

Once on the pier, the assembled crowd quickly grew restless. The Cobourg Brass Band was on the deck of the ship doing its best to entertain but the choice of songs just did not seem to please. Over the noisy crowd, someone on the wharf could be heard shouting for the tune *Dixie*. Professor Chalpauka glanced at the American crew, hesitated a moment, and then struck up the song. The crowd below cheered. Their patriotism now up, the Americans onboard *The Maple Leaf* demanded the next song and, not surprisingly, they wanted to hear *Yankee Doodle*. Those on the dock greeted this song with boos and whistles and when that failed to silence the band, they started to throw anything they could find. With a barrage of wood and stones, the mob drove their own town band from the deck. Some on shore then rushed the gangplank where they were met by an enraged crew. Wisely, the captain of *The Maple Leaf* decided that the time had come to leave.

The Standly wedding incident brought Cobourg's Civil War a measure of attention that many here had been seeking. Most of this interest came, however, from the other side. The story of the row at Cobourg was widely reported in New York State where it was told and retold at Union recruiting rallies as proof of the treachery of a former friend.

When it had mustered up enough courage to come back from Rochester, the Cobourg Brass Band disbanded for the remainder of the summer. To while away the now tuneless days, many in town took to daydreaming about the Confederacy. From this distance, the Old South looked heroic and tragic and larger than life. The *Cobourg Sentinel* became something of a hopeless romantic about it all and even the pro-North *Cobourg Star* developed a certain respect for the rebels.

For all their admiration for the Confederacy, there was one aspect that its Canadian friends found rather disturbing. The *Cobourg Sentinel*, like many, admitted to being troubled by the institution of slavery but still felt certain that the slave was better off in the fields of the South than back in "barbaric" Africa. The *Cobourg Star*, on the other hand, was as staunch an opponent of slavery as it was a defender of the Union. It believed that God was using this terrible war to purge the United States of slavery.

By the fall of 1864, the cause in which many here were escaping their troubles was, in reality, all but lost. Since the Battle of Gettysburg, now more than a year past, the Confederacy had lost Mississippi, Louisiana, and Georgia as well as portions of Tennessee and Virginia to the oncoming Yankees.

These Union victories then led to what the South regarded as yet more bad news, the re-election of Abraham Lincoln on November 8, 1864. The *Cobourg Sentinel* wailed with disappointment at the news but the *Star* was relieved. With the President back in office, it was sure now that the war would soon be over.

The American Civil War effectively came to an end five months later on April 9, 1865. That morning, the ragged remnants of Robert E. Lee's legendary army were gathered near a village in central Virginia called Appomattox Courthouse. Converging upon them there was a great Union juggernaut led by General Ulysses Grant. Outnumbered four or five to one on the battlefield, Lee surrendered his hungry bedraggled men in the early afternoon in the front parlour of a local home.

Cobourg read about the end of the war almost a week later. In the April 15th edition of the *Cobourg Sentinel*, there was little of the joy that the newspaper had predicted would greet the return of peace. Instead, a rather subdued *Sentinel* featured a sentimental tribute to the Confederacy and some uncharacteristically kind words for Grant whom the paper praised for the generous terms of surrender offered to Lee. But for Lincoln, that "...low-bred railsplitter..." only anger and blame remained.

In retrospect, some might have felt rather badly about this last remark. Shot at a Washington theatre the night before, Abraham Lincoln died at dawn on April 15 just as these spiteful words hit the streets. Three weeks later, on the day when he was buried, shops and schools in many Canadian communities closed early and church bells tolled. Cobourg itself does not seem to have marked this day in any particular way.

In the years following the American Civil War, times gradually improved in town. A boost to the local economy came along in 1867 when a group of wealthy American industrialists arrived in Cobourg. To supply their foundries back in Pennsylvania and Ohio, these men had recently purchased the Marmora Iron Mines north of Belleville and were now in need of a method to carry the ore down to the lakeshore for transport south. The old Cobourg-Peterborough Railroad seemed ideal for their purposes. It was soon purchased and re-routed northeast to Marmora.

Apparently untroubled by the recent bad feeling, a number of Americans moved to town to oversee the company. They found Cobourg peaceful and picturesque - a welcome relief from the heat, smoke, and congestion of the big city. Ever the entrepreneurs, the managers and investors of the Cobourg-Peterborough-Marmora Mining and Railway Company looked about and recognized yet another business opportunity here. They saw Cobourg's potential as a resort.

A driving force behind this new concept was Colonel William Chambliss, a Virginian who had served in the Union calvary. Chambliss came to Cobourg as a company manager but was soon devoting more of his time to the development of the town as a resort. Under his plan, the centerpiece would be a posh hotel. The name chosen for it was the one that

went back to the war that Col. Chambliss and his generation had come through. In honour of the national cemetery established on Robert E. Lee's old estate near Washington, this new Canadian hotel was called "The Arlington".

The Cobourg Summer Colony flourished for more than fifty years, from the mid 1870s until the late 1920s. Among those who enjoyed themselves here were many retired Civil War veterans. For the assorted captains, colonels, and generals that crowded into the Arlington each year, there were visits with old friends and comrades and a summer ball hosted by the Cobourg militia, the very force that had not so long ago sworn to defend the town against Americans.

When the Cobourg-Peterborough-Marmora Mining and Railway Company failed in 1893, Cobourg met this disappointment without grumbling. The Yankees were not held to blame. Through their enthusiasm and admiration for the town, the Americans who had come had helped renew local confidence. Cobourg was small - not the metropolis that the town fathers had dreamed of - but it was, as summer visitors always said, pretty and personable and unhurried. Content to now sit and listen to old war stories from new friends, the rancour of the Civil War era in Cobourg was, in the end, easily forgiven and forgotten.

MINA BENSON HUBBARD (1870 - 1956)
BY DONNA S. MCGILLIS
PRESENTED BY PETER DELANTY

Few people outside her own family and one or two historians are aware that one of Canada's first women explorers was a small, feisty woman of Irish ancestry from Bewdley, Ontario.

Mina Benson was born in 1870 southeast of the village of Bewdley, near the south shore of Rice Lake. She took her place in the pages of Canadian history in 1905 when she completed a 576 mile journey to previously unexplored regions of northern Labrador and published a book about her experiences, entitled ***A Woman's Way Through Unknown Labrador*** (1908). This extraordinary contribution to the geographic record of this country was accomplished with four native guides in two nineteen foot canoes.

Mina was the seventh of eight children born to James and Jane Wood Benson. The family homestead was on the Cavan Road at Lot 28, Concession 7, Hamilton Township in the picturesque Cold Creek Valley of the Rice Lake plains.

Around 1846, Mina's father, his four brothers and two sisters emigrated to Canada from County Cavan, Ireland. They settled in Hamilton Township on land newly opened for development between the hamlets of Plainville and Bewdley. This area, with its abundant water source, was attractive property for new settlers from the British Isles looking for independence and a chance to own their own land. The Bensons, like many others, were escaping the dreadful famine conditions in their native Ireland.

Although two brothers eventually sought opportunities elsewhere, the remaining family members, including Mina's father James, persevered on their uncleared land. They suffered many hardships for the property they chose did not prove to be productive farmland. Although the second generation enjoyed the advantages and security of a large extended family, several descendants recall their parents saying they grew up in poverty and "*had a hard time eking out a living.*" John Benson's granddaughter, Mary Lean Lander, remembers hearing that her thrifty grandfather would advise his family "*many a mickle makes a muckle.*"

Mina Benson grew up in a vine-covered frame house built by her father, that survived until 1936. According to the late Glen Cole, a Cavan Road neighbour who helped his father dismantle the house, it was timber-framed structure built of some of the finest pine he had ever seen.

Surrounded by brothers, sisters, aunts, uncles and many cousins, Mina grew up in a close-knit community, where, in spite of their hardships, the family contributed to the social fabric of the surrounding area. Mina's father, James Benson, served on the township council

and was elected Reeve in 1861. His brother John and family were largely responsible for the establishment of a small Baptist church near their home.

According to records, Mina's family was associated with several local Methodist churches. Other members attended the Congregational church in Cold Springs and were buried in its cemetery.

Along with her cousins, Mina received her early education at the Bewdley school located north of the Benson farm's at the junction of Cavan Road and present Northumberland Road #9. For a short time, Mina became a school teacher herself, at a local school with the colourful name of "Glourourim" (a contraction of a term attributed to Gabriel Orr, an early Scottish settler of the area, who is said to have climbed a nearby hill to "glower over them").

Later, the adventurous and perhaps restless teacher decided to make a career change and moved to Brooklyn, New York to study nursing science. It was during her nursing career that Mina's epic journey into the annals of Canadian history had its inception.

In May of 1900, Leonidas Hubbard Jr., a young writer with the magazine **Saturday Evening Post** was stricken with typhoid fever. During his convalescence among the Shawangunk mountains north of New York City, the nurse assigned to attend him was Mina Benson. After a courtship, during which Hubbard wrote a friend that he had made "*a firm resolution some months ago that a certain portion of Canada should be annexed to the United States,*" on January 31, 1901, Hubbard married his nurse. At thirty-one, the bride was two years older than her groom.

Hubbard worked as a journalist for various newspapers and magazines. His work as assistant editor with the outdoor magazine **Outing** led to various camping expeditions and wilderness trips. These trips, however, failed to satisfy Hubbard's ambition to explore a region known only to native people. It was during this time that the public was caught up in the excitement of expeditions to the Antarctic and the Arctic, especially the exploits of Admiral Robert E. Peary.

Hubbard was thus inspired to be part of the conquest of one of the last unexplored regions of northern Canada. He chose Labrador.

In February 1903, with the reluctant backing of his editor Caspar Whitney, Hubbard organized the Hubbard Labrador Expedition.

Hubbard had chosen the mouth of the partially explored George River of Ungava as his destination. From Hamilton Inlet on the Labrador coast, he intended to map the unexplored Naskaupi River and, crossing the height of land, continue north down the George River to Ungava Bay.

According to records "on the very day of departure, at almost the first possible opportunity, the travellers took a wrong turn." Misled by incomplete maps, the party of three missed their intended landmark at the mouth of the Naskaupi, which led to the George River, and entered instead the smaller Susan River. Plagued by diarrhea, Hubbard slowed the expedition down so they covered only eighty miles in fifteen days. Realizing they were lost, the canoe was abandoned and the party started to retrace its steps. Soon Hubbard was unable to carry his pack. When he could go no further, two of the party were sent on to get help. It took the exhausted native guide, George Elson, ten days to reach the winter cabin of a trapper. Immediately starting back, they found Hubbard's friend and companion Dillon Wallace Jr., a New York lawyer, in the snow with his feet frozen. Further on they found Hubbard wrapped in his blankets, dead.

Not until January 1904 did Mina receive a telegram starkly stating "Mr. Hubbard died October 18 in the interior of Labrador."

Dillon Wallace accompanied Hubbard's body back to New York, retaining (much to Mina's dismay) Hubbard's photographs, maps and field notes, which he now considered to be his property.

When Wallace later published a book about the expedition entitled *The Lure of the Labrador Wild* (1905), Mina was upset. She felt her husband's reputation had been sullied. In subtle ways, Wallace portrayed Hubbard as an inexperienced young man who insisted on continuing the expedition after he (Wallace) had advised against it.

Mina was resolved to vindicate her husband's reputation especially when she heard that Wallace decided to revive the public's flagging interest in his book by attempting to complete the expedition himself.

Mina was determined to complete the journey to Ungava Bay before Wallace and "write a book to set the record straight about our achievements." She wrote,

"It seemed to me fit that my husband's name should reap the fruits of service which had cost him so much, and in the summer of 1905, I myself undertook the conduct of the second Hubbard Expedition."

Mina resigned her nursing position and left New York. She sailed from Halifax on June 16, 1905 arriving on June 25 aboard the *Harlow* at Northwest River, the same starting place as her husband. Ironically, Wallace and his crew were also aboard the *Harlow*.

Mina's crew numbered four including George Elson, the survivor of her husband's party who had rescued Dillon Wallace and for whom Mina had great admiration.

According to records, the Wallace and Hubbard expeditions left Northwest River within twenty-four hours of each other. This time both were better prepared, taking with them at

least three times the amount of provisions taken on the first expedition. Mina's two canvas-covered canoes were packed to the gunwales. Included were two silk tents, one stove, kitchen utensils, small tools, and an outfit of firearms and ammunition. Along with a sextant, barometer, thermometer, two Kodak cameras, and fishing tackle, Mina also brought along a little feather pillow and a hot water bottle.

They had two months to travel over 550 miles of unknown wilderness to reach Ungava Bay and the ***Pelican***, the only steamer leaving the George River Hudson's Bay Company post on Ungava Bay during the last week of August. If they missed the ***Pelican***, they would be forced to winter over until the following summer. There was also the threat that Dillon Wallace would beat them to the steamer and rush to publication with his own version of the Labrador expedition.

Although Mina was better prepared and had the advantage of good weather on her expedition, it was much more than a relaxing camping trip. The party had to cope with fast-moving water, capsized canoes (when they came close to losing half their supplies) and dangerous rapids necessitating onerous portages. One back-breaking portage Mina recorded "...the trail was cut straight up the bank which was eighty feet high and very steep. If any one supposes that cutting a trail means making a nice, smooth little path through the woods, let him revise his ideas."

Mina took great pleasure in the rugged landscape of Labrador. She wrote with lively enthusiasm about the forests, mountains and wildlife. In early August, she saw one of the most spectacular sights of the natural world - the great Labrador caribou migration, travelling east between the George River and the Atlantic Ocean. She observed "... a solid mass of caribou, feeding on the luxuriant moss ... it was a magnificent sight".

In mid-August, the expedition encountered a party of Montagnais Indians and a band of the little-known Naskapis. According to Alan Cooke in ***The Beaver (Summer 1960)*** "*Her observations are among the last we have of these natives in anything like their natural state.*" From the Naskapis, she learned with joy and relief that Ungava Bay was only five more days down river.

Finally, on August 27, after portaging two final sets of rapids, the red roofs of the Hudson's Bay George River post came into view. Fearing the ***Pelican*** may have gone, the strain was unbearable. Were they in time? Had Wallace grabbed the prize? From John Ford, the agent at the post, they learned the Company's ship was not expected until the middle of September. The exquisite agony was over.

It was not until two months had gone by that the ***Pelican*** arrived at the George River post. Wallace and his crew arrived the evening of October 18 and with chagrin learned he had lost the race to Ungava by sixty days.

Mina summed up her epic journey in her diary,

"Length of Journey - 576 miles from post to post ... Time - June 27th to August 27th. Forty-three days of actual travelling, eighteen days in camp. Results - the pioneer maps of the Nascaupee [sic] and George Rivers, that of the Nascaupee [sic] showing Seal Lake and Lake Michikamau to be in the same drainage basis and what geographers had supposed were two distinct rivers, the Northwest and the Nascaupee [sic] to be one and the same..."

Her last paragraph explained her husband's failure and her success on the weather.

Both Hubbard and Wallace wrote books about their experiences. The public found Wallace's account the most interesting. Although inaccurate, it was apparently heightened by his colourful writing style. Mina's more scientific work and detailed maps, however, were recognized by geographical authorities. In fact, her maps of the Naskaupi and George River system were accepted by cartographers of the American Geographical Society.

Unfortunately, much of the land first explored by the Hubbards has vanished, submerged under the manmade Smallwood Reservoir that feeds the hydro-electric power project at Churchill Falls.

After Mina returned to New York, she published her book, ***A Woman's Way Through Unknown Labrador***. It was serialized in *Harper's* magazine and when it was published in London, she went to England on a lecture tour to promote it.

Within a year, she met and married Harold Ellis, a well-to-do son of a British Member of Parliament with whom she had three children. According to an account of their wedding in the *Cobourg World*, September 18, 1908, the Ellises were married at 8 Prince Arthur Avenue, Toronto, by Mina's brother-in-law, Rev. G.W. McColl. *"The bride, who was unattended, was attired in a soft grey silk with trimmings of old Flemish lace, the gifts of the groom's mother, and carried a bouquet of white roses which with a diamond bracelet were the gifts of the groom."* Harold's father, the Hon. John Edward Ellis, was a Quaker, a one-time chairman of the House of Commons, and under-secretary for India.

With Harold, Mina lived at Wrae-Head, the family estate in Scalby, Yorkshire (the house is now a country hotel). Mina was lionized in England, became a follower of educator and philosopher Rudolph Steiner, and was an acquaintance of George Bernard Shaw. In the 1920s the Ellises were divorced.

Mina never lost her love of the wilderness and longed to return to the scenes of her triumph. She never lost touch with George Elson, with whom she corresponded over the years and generously shared her book royalties. The two old companions enjoyed a few days together including a canoe trip up the Moose River.

On her way home to England, Mina visited her relatives in the Bewdley and Cobourg area and viewed the grave sites of her parents in the Plainville United Church cemetery. Her great niece, Muriel Benson Campbell, remembers Mina's lively conversation, playing the organ at her old home, and taking the children on long walks in the woods.

Mina continued to live in England and during World War II welcomed many Canadian soldiers to her home, one of whom was her great nephew Edgar Benson, a grandson of her brother William. Benson was later to become finance minister of Canada in the Liberal government of Pierre Trudeau and in 1982 was appointed high-commissioner to Ireland, the Benson ancestral homeland.

Mina spent her last days, physically and emotionally, in a private nursing home in Coulsden, south of London.

On May 4, 1956 at the age of eighty-six, on what would be her last walk in the outdoors she loved so much, she became confused and wandered onto a railroad track where she was killed instantly by a fast-moving train. An inquest was held at Croydon Town Hall with a verdict of accidental death. Her funeral was at Golders Green Crematorium at 2:15 on May 11. According to editor and writer, Jan Tyrwhitt, Mina's daughter wrote to a friend in Toronto "*The only instructions mother left in her will, regarding the disposal of her ashes was that she would like them scattered to the winds.*"

In the Bewdley area of Hamilton Township, the Benson heritage has been honoured with a road named in their memory. A historical plaque in Mina's name has been erected in front of her family home. Descendants of Mina's aunts and uncles, brothers and sisters have prospered. Some, such as sisters Dorothy Lean Mann, the late Mary Lean Lander, and Flora Lean Barrett followed Mina's footsteps and became school teachers. Others, such as the late Gertrude Benson Manley and her son Neil Manley, became active in local churches. Another relative, John Lean, became deputy-reeve of Hamilton Township.

Mina Benson left a valuable historical legacy to this country and took her place at the forefront of achievements made by Canadian women.

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**A BRIEF OVERVIEW OF THE HISTORY OF RAILWAYS
IN NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY AND SURROUNDING AREAS
BY DAVID SAVAGE**

The first railway in the area was the ***Cobourg and Peterborough***. The railway was chartered in 1850 and construction began from a point on the harbourfront at present day Cobourg north to Harwood, crossed Rice Lake by way of a causeway and a bridge, then headed northwest to Peterborough. A spur line was built from the main line to the village of Baltimore and an extension line was built from Peterborough to Chemong Lake (Bridgenorth).

The next railway to arrive in the area was the ***Grand Trunk***, which began construction in the area in 1856 and spanned basically east to west following the north side of the lake. The biggest obstacle was spanning the Ganaraska River valley in downtown Port Hope. Stonework for the bridge came from quarries in the Bowmanville area and the line was open for traffic in 1857/58.

Speaking of Port Hope, the ***Port Hope and Peterborough Railway*** was chartered in 1858. After a number of surveys, a route was chosen for the railway headed north from the harbour in Port Hope to Millbrook and then northeast to Peterborough. In 1860, the railway entertained more extensive plans and, therefore, changed its name to the ***Port Hope, Lindsay and Beaverton Railway***, with the extension of a line northwest from Millbrook to Lindsay, Beaverton and, later on, continued around Lake Simcoe to Orillia and Midland.

At the north end of the county, the ***Ontario and Quebec Railway*** was chartered in 1884. The railway began construction of its line from Montreal to Toronto by way of Smith Falls, Havelock, and Peterborough.

A new railway in eastern Canada that originated in the west was the ***Canadian Northern***, which chartered its Ontario division in 1912. The line arrived from the west and continued south to Toronto, then extended farther east to Montreal by way of following the shoreline of Lake Ontario east to Deseronto, then northeast to Ottawa. After crossing the Ottawa River into Quebec, it continued to Montreal.

Also in 1912, another railway company, the ***Campbellford, Lake Ontario and Western Railway***, began construction of its line from a point on the ***Ontario and Quebec Railway*** at Glen Tay (a point just west of Smith Falls). The line continued southwest, dropping down to meet Lake Ontario at Belleville. The line then continued, following the shoreline, to Division Street in Cobourg.

THE DOWNFALLS AND THE MERGERS

The first casualty was the **Cobourg and Peterborough Railway**. Due to poor construction practices on the bridge over Rice Lake, the winter of 1874, and vandals from the **Port Hope Railway**, the bridge collapsed, taking the fortunes of the railway with it. The railway came back to life briefly in 1876 as it constructed a line from Trent River to Blairton. For several years, it shipped ore by rail from Blairton to Trent River, by lake boat from Trent River to Harwood, by rail again from Harwood to Cobourg, then by lake boat from Cobourg to Cleveland. Two stations of the railway remain. The one formerly located on Cobourg's harbourfront has now been moved to Stuart Street, where it serves as a residence. The station from Harwood has been moved to Roseneath, where it serves as a community hall. The railway was purchased by the **Grand Trunk** in the late 1800s and the remaining section (Cobourg to Harwood) was abandoned in 1912 and the rail sold for the war effort.

The **Grand Trunk** fared better with its Canadian division being merged into **Canadian National Railways** (now CN North America). The original line still continues to serve an important rail link between Ontario and Quebec.

The **Port Hope, Lindsay and Beaverton Railway** became part of the **Grand Trunk Railway** family, which then became part of CN. The first casualty was the abandonment of the line from Millbrook to Lindsay in 1937, with the line from Port Hope to Peterborough being abandoned in 1959. The PH, L & B station in Port Hope still remains on Walton Street and is now Lent's Travel.

The **Ontario and Quebec Railway** was merged into **Canadian Pacific** and remains basically intact today, with the exception of the section from Havelock to Glen Tay, which has been abandoned in the last few years. Original stations still standing on the line include Tweed, Havelock, and Peterborough.

The **Canadian Northern** was doomed from the beginning, basically due to competition with the **Grand Trunk**. The section of the line from Port Hope to Belleville was abandoned in 1937. Other sections of the line were abandoned over a period of time, thus resulting in the line falling into history. The **Canadian Northern** was merged with CN in 1927. **Canadian Northern** stations still remain at Whitby, Oshawa, Starkeville, Port Hope, and Smith Falls.

The **Campbellford, Lake Ontario and Western Railway** merged with **Canadian Pacific** (which continued construction of the line from Division Street in Cobourg west) and still exists.

Further information on these lines and stations may be obtained by writing **Canadian Station News**.