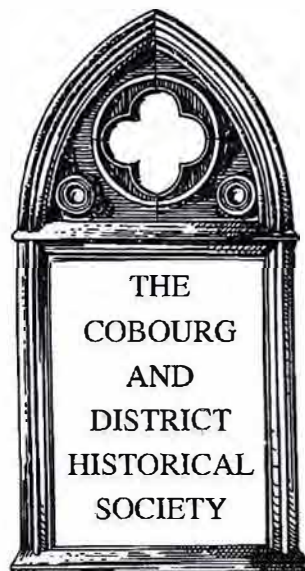


# HISTORICAL REVIEW 19



**2001**



**2002**

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THE COBOURG AND DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
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**THE COBOURG AND DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
PROGRAMME OF SPEAKERS  
2001 - 2002**

**2001**

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**2002**

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February	<b>Heritage Day Meeting: Two Historical Re-enactment Videos</b>	Page 13
March	[cancelled due to inclement weather]	
April	<b>Secrets from the Archives:</b> <b>Solving a Mystery of the Napoleonic Wars</b> Denis Smith	Page 14
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**Cover Photograph**

Lydia Pinkham Medicine Company, 128 University Ave., West in Cobourg. (Originally built as The Model School, and now demolished.)

## THE CANADIAN CANOE MUSEUM

by  
John Jennings

At the September meeting, Associate Professor of History at Trent University and Vice-Chairman of the Canadian Canoe Museum, John Jennings, spoke to the Society about the museum and of the significance of the canoe in Canadian history. Professor Jennings informed us – prior to the public announcement – that the Trudeau family was donating the former Prime Minister’s canoes and the [buckskin] jacket he was photographed wearing while in his canoe. This was an informative talk which gave us an incentive to visit the region’s newest tourist destination.

John Jolie, Newsletter Editor

### “Paddle On”

At a University of Toronto Alumni tour of the Canadian Canoe Museum in Peterborough, Professor John Jennings spoke of the historical importance of the canoe, a uniquely Canadian icon. “It is one of the greatest gifts of the first peoples in the land to all those who came after. It is the most powerful symbol joining the founding peoples – Aboriginal, French and English. It is a symbol of our history and it can be a symbol of our future.”

The museum was started in the 1950s by the University of Toronto Professor Emeritus, Kirk Wipper, when he was the owner and director of Camp Kandalore in the Haliburton Region. Although the canoes were first used for heritage education programmes, eventually the collection grew to form the Kanawa International Museum. The enormous collection, which contains examples of indigenous canoes and kayaks from all over Canada, was donated to a group of dedicated volunteers who helped to transform it into the Canadian Canoe Museum.

Extracted from an article by Nancy Graydon  
*Border Lines*, 2002, Volume 4(1):3

### Update

John Jennings, of the Canadian Canoe Museum, had exciting news about much-needed restoration for the façades of the two Canoe Museum buildings. Thanks to a Ministry of Natural Resources grant, the large gravelled space between the buildings will be developed into a “northern wilderness” landscape with a pond large enough for paddling demonstrations. Jennings stressed the tremendous amount of input and work by staff and volunteers in the creation and running of the Canoe Museum, and indicated that this is unlikely to change.

Taken from write-up by Katharine Hooke  
*Peterborough Historical Society Bulletin*, 2002, 295<sup>th</sup> Bulletin, page 3

**COBOURG and DISTRICT: A GEOGRAPHICAL POINT of VIEW**  
by  
**John Jolie**

**O**ur October speaker was our Society's newsletter editor, John Jolie, who presented an excellent overview on the geography from Lake Ontario north to Rice Lake. In his illustrated talk, John touched upon the formation of land forms, old lake strands, glacial impact, and present land use. Cleverly drawing his into his subject, John posed a number of questions: What did our shoreline look like in the past and what will happen to it? Did you know that Rice Lake is a shadow of its former self and that all of you have crossed the exposed lake bottom? Why does the Weather Network tell us that the maximum exposure time for UV waves is at some other time than noon? What is the Oak Ridges Moraine? Where can you see traces of the old glacial Lake Iroquois?

The members of the audience were so taken with John's presentation, he was asked to conduct a bus trip which would highlight and illustrate many of these topics. The trip was in lieu of the Annual Dinner. John's write-up of this talk and for the tour are combined beginning on page 20.

CAMP X  
by  
Alan Paul Longfield©

Almost exactly sixty years ago, on the bitterly cold Saturday evening of 6 December, 1941, at 6p.m., the ultra-secret Canadian and British joint special operations training base – known to SOE as Special Training School 103 – opened for unconventional warfare training on the desolate, windswept Lake Ontario shoreline of east Whitby.

Anyone with the most cursory knowledge of mid-twentieth century history would recognize the linkage with the “the day that will live in infamy;” that is, Sunday, December 7<sup>th</sup>, the scene of a sudden attack by Imperial Japanese Naval Forces on the American Pacific Fleet lying at anchor at Pearl Harbour, O’hua, Hawaii. Was this sheer dumb luck, serendipity, coincidence, or as the result of top-secret, carefully co-ordinated Allied planning and co-operation? The record is silent and may forever be so.

However, what we are able to glean from the official accounts – Canadian, British, and American – is the indisputable fact the U.S. President, Franklin Delano Roosevelt and his chief of American “homeland and foreign intelligence military security,” William “Wild Bill” Donovan, had been intimately involved in clandestine discussions with Prime Minister Winston Churchill’s Winnipeg-born head of Secret Intelligence Service (SIS), William Stephenson. Stephenson, the Quiet Canadian, also known as *Intrepid*, was conveniently headquartered at the Rockefeller Center in New York City. His organization, under the innocuous title of British Security co-ordination, operated silently, ruthlessly, and with deadly-effectiveness throughout North and South America, and Bermuda. Its operatives, including many women, like the beautiful spy Cynthia, were often well-placed in the social register, with access to the highest levels of influence and decision-making in business. As well, they had access to military, diplomatic and government agencies, acting as spies, and secret agents conducting economic and subversive warfare against Axis commercial and business interests. Often acting as double agents, these people penetrated networks of Axis *agents provocateurs* and foreign governments sympathetic to the enemy cause. Sound eerily familiar?

Known as “Camp X” on the streets as no-one outside of the establishment knew what was really going on inside its fences, it was called “STS 103” in SOE files and “S 25-1-1” in RCMP and Canadian government archives. To the staff, it was simply “the farm,” a nickname adopted by hundreds of Donovan’s Office of Strategic Services (OSS) officer and trainee visitors, and still used by the CIA for their headquarters at Langley, Virginia. Camp X was the first of its kind in North America. That it was located here in central Ontario, was not by accident. First, it was the ideal site for Hydra, the most powerful, short wave radio receiver in the world, at the time. Hydra’s huge triple-diversity rhombic antennae on the Lake Ontario shore were capable of direct communications with locations in South America, New York, Ottawa, Washington, and yes, Bletchley Park, home of the Enigma ‘ultra secret’ in Great Britain. The radio, as it was reported to the local press, was an experimental CBC transmitter. The raucous dynamite, gelignite, and

RDX explosions during training, which not-infrequently rocked homes, upsetting the residents and shattering shop windows, were caused by special weapons testing, it is said. Major Art Bushell, a native Torontonionian, was the Camp's adjutant, whose many roles included calming the outburst of indignant locals with suave fictions such as these. I'm sure the odd well-placed bottle of fine scotch whiskey helped to lubricate the restoration of good will among men.

After D-Day and until 1969, Hydra continued to play a pivotal role in the Cold War, particularly during the Cuban missile crisis, until the installation was finally shut down in 1969. In addition, the camp's location was ideally suited for rapid access by American military and domestic intelligence and government personnel either by high-speed motor launch across Lake Ontario from Rochester, New York, or by air using the air training base at Oshawa, or by automobile.

The large, ethnically-diverse populations of Toronto and Montreal were fertile recruiting grounds for the nearly 500 Canadian 'clients' who were to undergo the first ten weeks of their intensive intelligence training for specific missions of political and special means warfare in Eastern-occupied Europe and East Asia. It has been estimated that the Quebec contingent, who parachuted into occupied France a few weeks before D-Day, contributed significantly to the disruption of German rail transport and communications capabilities, which plagued and delayed Field Marshall Erwin Rommel's response to the Normandy invasion in the first critical hours.

This book, the SOE Syllabus, which was refined at Camp X, is the product of its officer cadre who were recognized by the SOE as among the best, brightest and most inventive in the entire chain of schools including Beaulieu, England and Morar, Scotland. Some, such as the legendary William Ewart Fairbairn, Chief Instructor – who, according to the report of the young British naval Intelligence officer, Ian Fleming, was reputed to be able to dodge bullets – were to be snapped up by the OSS, the fledgling American intelligence service for service at the many Camp X-clones. The first of these was RTU-11 in Maryland on the site of the present Camp David presidential retreat.

The Syllabus quickly became known in SOE circles as "the bible" and to this day is the foundation handbook for all Special Forces training manuals, such as Delta Force, JTF2m, SAS, and likely, al Qaeda.

This documentary video is a student production from Niagara College. It is an interesting, and I think, invaluable addition to the record. The on-camera narrator is my co-writer and research partner, Lynn-Philip Hodgson. After the programme, I shall be happy to answer your questions and to sign any of our books and special edition calendars, which you may purchase for yourselves or as presents at significantly discounted prices. Our first book, *Inside Camp X*, now in its fourth printing, has sold more than 21 000 copies world wide and – according to this morning's news flash – it is number 23 in sales on the Amazon Germany website! Our second book, *Almost*, is the true story of Camp X-trained Canadian, Joe Gelleny, Secret Agent, and who you will meet on screen. Our most recent publication, *Camp X The Final Battle*, was

released on the 11<sup>th</sup> of September, and has already climbed to 24<sup>th</sup> place on the 100 top best sellers in Canada on the Chapters/Indigo and Coles lists. And now, *Inside Camp X*, the video.

**Editor's note:** Mr. Longfield showed the above mentioned video to the members of the CDHS.



**MEMBERS' SHOW and TELL**  
**January Meeting**

**O**n January 22, 2002, the meeting featured our Third Annual "Show and Tell" evening. Members brought items, documents, and individual accounts which hold historical significance on a personal, local or global level to share with the group. Once again, it was a pleasant and informative evening and provided a forum to learn more about our members. Many thanks to all who participated through their presentations and subsequent write-ups, and of course, for the appreciation demonstrated by the audience.

**Marion Hagen** brought three items pertaining to Cobourg's history which she then generously presented to the Archives.

- ◆ A booklet entitled "Tested Recipes" was published for the Lydia E. Pinkham's Medicine Company of Cobourg, Ontario, Canada. Interspersed with recipes are advertisements, testimonials, and household hints for Lydia E. Pinkham's Famous Medicines: Vegetable Compound, Blood Medicine, Liver Pills, and Sanative [sic] Wash.

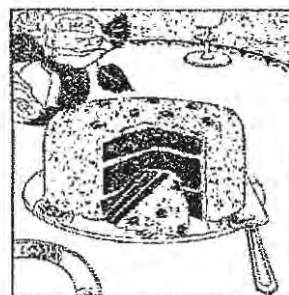
**LYDIA E.**  
**PINKHAM'S**  
**SANATIVE**  
**WASH**



**Melt-In-Your-Mouth Chocolate Cake** [page 11]

1-1/4 squares chocolate  
1/4 cup melted butter  
1 cup sugar  
2 eggs

1-1/2 cups flour  
1/2 cup sweet milk  
1/2 tsp. cream of tartar  
1 tsp. vanilla



Cream sugar and egg yolks. Add chocolate and butter. Then add milk and flour, soda and cream of tartar sifted together. Fold in beaten whites of eggs. Flavour with vanilla. Bake in 8" x 8" tin. [The housewife is presumed to know the oven temperature, the length of baking time, and that the chocolate was to be melted before adding to batter!]



## *Ask Your Friends*

More than half the women who take Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound bought their first bottle because they heard some other woman praising it

**“From a Waitress”** [page 18]

“I was a waitress. Every day I was on my feet and my feet and ankles would swell. I used to get so tired and worn out, I would have to lie down at noon. I also suffered from female weakness. A friend of mine told me to take **Lydia E. Pinkham’s Vegetable Compound** to build me up. So I left work for two months and took the **Vegetable Compound** regularly. Now I am back at work and getting along fine. Sometimes toward evening I get tired but I think I shall be well and strong in a few months because I am still taking the **Compound**.”

Hilda Fredericks

831 Queen St. E., Y.W.C.A., Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario

**Waiting on Table** [page 15]

The hostess is served first so that she may know that the food is properly prepared and provided with the spoon or fork for serving.

After the hostess, the maid may serve all women in the room before men. Or, she may begin at the right of the hostess and serve around the table regardless of persons.

Serve the second course around the table to the left. Alternate in this way so that no one person is always served last.

Stand at the left of a person being served and hold the dish in your left hand so that he can help himself easily.

Put glasses or cups down at the right of the person with your right hand.

- ◆ The second item is a "Calendar of the University of Victoria College, Cobourg, Canada" for the year 1883. The calendar outlines the programmes taught and the faculty.
- ◆ The third item is a "Season 1897-98 Souvenir Program of the Second Annual Concert of the Cobourg Choral Union held on Tuesday Night, February 22<sup>nd</sup>, '98 in the Opera House, Cobourg, Ontario." The programme lists the Officers, Committee Members, Soloists, Orchestra, Chorus Members and the Programme including the words for "The Rose Maiden." Of interest, too, are the paid advertisements of local merchants; for example, "Nobby Eye-Glasses accurately fitted by W.H. Hopper, Scientific Optician."



**Les Rimmer** brought a charming china "Donkey Barometer" which sat on the mantelpiece in his bedroom at home in England. He does not remember a time when it was not there, and when he emigrated to Canada, he brought it with him. Les entertained the Society members by reading the following instructions for the use of the barometer:

If tail is dry	—	Fine
If tail is wet	—	Rain
If tail moves	—	Windy
If tail cannot be seen	—	Foggy
If tail is frozen	—	Cold
If tail falls out	—	Earthquake

(The tail is a piece of string.)



**Mary Rimmer** proudly displayed a music box manufactured by Nicole Frères, Geneve [sic], Switzerland for Wales & McCulloch, London, England. The box had been handed down from her grandfather who bore the unusual name of Samuel Theophilus Skee Wicks of Lowestoft, England.

The box, approximately 18" by 8" contains a brass cylinder studded with pins to strike a plate of metal teeth. The music produced somewhat resembles a harp. Mary wound up the mechanism to play a few of the six hymn tunes from the 1800s.



**Dorothy De Lisle brought four examples of Souvenir Ware.**

- ◆ The first item was a pressed, patterned glass mug in clambroth<sup>1</sup> glass, hand-painted with pink flowers and bearing the inscription “Souvenir of Harriston, Ont.”

This item was purchased in St. Jacob’s, Ontario by Dorothy because she has fond memories of visiting her Grandmother Macdonald there. On one such occasion, she had to share a bed with her grandmother and she remembers being astonished at seeing her grandmother in a long flannel nightgown sitting on the side of the bed unpinning her grey hair which fell to her waist, and then brushing it carefully.

Dorothy had some newspaper clippings referring to her great-great-grandmother Webb who was among the early settlers of Harriston in the spring of 1845, and whose first child, Rachael, born in 1846, was the first white child born in Harriston. At that time, the country was heavily wooded and the only roads were just Indian trails. These first settlers were mainly emigrants from Ireland. Mr. And Mrs. Webb first lived in a log cabin on the bank of the Maitland River. John, Margaret, Thomas, and Webb Streets are all named after family members. In 1870, Mr. And Mrs. Webb donated the land on which St. George’s Anglican Church was built. In April, 1951, Dorothy’s grandmother Margaret Macdonald turned the sod for the new Parish Hall.
- ◆ The second item was a small, white, pressed, patterned glass mug with a pink trim and the inscription “Souvenir of BRACE BRIDGE MUSKOKA” on it. Dorothy purchased this because of summers spent near there on the Lake of Bays, and because of the spelling of the town’s name (that is, as two separate words rather than as one).
- ◆ The third item was a small match holder and striker purchased in Port Hope. It has a handle and on the bottom are the rings for lighting the match. The identification mark on the bottom is difficult to read, but the name “Victoria” can be made out and is probably related to the German company which produced a great quantity of souvenir ware. The decoration on the holder is a picture of the car ferry which crossed Lake Ontario between Cobourg and Rochester with a lighthouse on the extreme right side. The inscription reads: “Car Ferry “Ontario No.1” at Cobourg, Ont.”
- ◆ The fourth item was a leather autograph book purchased in Syracuse, N.Y. On the front cover is the name “Joan Doran, 301/2 Savannah, Rochester, N.Y.” and inside the back cover is the name “Joan Doran, 439 Cottesmore Ave., Cobourg, Ontario.” One entry inside is dated 7.8.48 and signed by “Your Dear Sister, Janie Brooks.” Another is signed “Douglas L. May at 439 Cottesmore.” One other entry is folded in half and reads “For durty people only” and when opened, says “Use Lava Sope,” signed “Jim.”



**Godfrey De Lisle** brought a little book entitled “Notes Diverses & Dates.” It was used by John

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<sup>1</sup> Clambroth glass is a semi-translucent milky-white glass.

Henry De Lisle of Guernsey C.I. to record family dates and movements as well as other events of interest. John Henry, 1803 - 1878, started his notebook in 1830, but copied some earlier dates from another book.

During his presentation, Godfray read the following entries:

- ◆ 1830, July 27, 28, 29: The French Revolution of July and Louis XVIII made King.
- ◆ 1832: Earlier this year Fred De Lisle Junior settled at Buenos Ayres under the firm of Bertram & De Lisle
- ◆ 1838, June 28: Coronation of Queen Victoria
- ◆ 1840, Dec. 15: Funérailles de Napoleon, à Paris.
- ◆ 1846, Aug. 23, 24: Queen Victoria & Prince Albert visited Guernsey; and on another excursion on 2 and 3 of Sept., visited Jersey.
- ◆ 1848, Feb. 22, 23, 24: Louis XVIII and French Revolution.
- ◆ 1848, Dec. 20: Louis Napoleon installed as definitive President of the French Republic until May 1852. - elected by a majority of votes.
- ◆ 1864, Sept. 6: Mr. Chadwick, Surgeon, Eliza Evans' husband, thrown out of his Dog-cart & died on the 12<sup>th</sup> leaving 4 children by his first wife & 4 others by her & another coming.
- ◆ 1869 [A comment based on his research]: Sir John De Lisle was appointed Governor of Guernsey on the 28<sup>th</sup> May 1405 6 Henry IV (Vide Curtis French rolls Voc 11 page 189) and proceeded to that island in July following. Sir John De Lisle was from Hampshire. The parochial register of St. Peter Port extends only to the year 1563.
- ◆ 1873: Contributions for getting Alfred H. De Lisle admitted into St. Anne's Asylum. A list of 24 persons subscribed a total of £160.00.
- ◆ A note pertaining to Thomas Hardy was not about the well-known English author of the same name!



**Angus Read** showed us a print of the Mona Lisa which had been presented to his mother as the prize for excellence in spelling in Grade 2.

**Miriam Johnson** brought a "Fore & Aft" tin hat box dating from about 1759.

**Anne Burnham's** item of local interest was the Common Prayer Book of James Gilchrist Burnham in which he had written notes about where he lived.

**Peter Greathead** showed his treasured cane which his grandfather had carved.

**Allan Lawrence** related tales about his wife Moira's Scottish uncle stationed in Accra who appears to have been a rather blatant racist.

**Jim Worrall** talked about his pedestal table and chest of drawers which the renowned Cobourg cabinetmaker, F. S. Clench had made.

**Jim Weller** shared vignettes from a Log Book written when the author was 16 years old and showed us a piece of glass from the Brewer's Warehouse in Hiroshima 1946.



**Editor's note:** As each speaker was asked to write a short description of his or her treasure, the lengthier ones are those which were received. Many thanks to all who participated. It was, as always, a treasured evening.

## HERITAGE MEETING

February 2002

Each year our February programme relates in some way to an aspect of our Canadian history to celebrate Heritage Week. This year, two videos which highlighted events in the War of 1812 in the Thames Valley were shown. Entitled *Battle Hill: A Living History* and *War Comes to the Thames River Valley*, these historical reconstructions provided insight into the incursion of the Americans, the loss of the Native leader, Tecumseh, and the beneficial efforts of the natives which tipped the balance in preventing an American takeover. The films also documented the endeavours of a dedicated group of history buffs whose goal is to bring history to life.

The Society thanks Life Member Thomas Hawke for his gift of the films and to the film producer, Al MacGregor, for granting permission to show the videos at our meeting.



SECRETS FROM THE ARCHIVES:  
SOLVING A MYSTERY OF THE NAPOLEONIC WARS

by  
Denis Smith

**T**he *Prisoners of Cabrera* is a story from the Napoleonic Wars, when France dominated Europe from the English Channel to Vienna and from Copenhagen to Cádiz. By 1808, when the book begins, the French emperor had signed truces with Prussia, Russia and Austria in the east, and Britain was Napoleon's only powerful enemy. Napoleon sought new fields to conquer, and looked south to Spain and Portugal.

The tale that I tell in the book is what might be called a forgotten footnote to history, a small lesson which has something to say to us about how modern nations have treated one another over the last two centuries of terrible warfare. We don't seem to have learned very much since Napoleon's time, except how to use more advanced weapons, and how to ignore moral restraints, in ever more spectacular and destructive ways.

I first heard of Cabrera and its prisoners when I spent some time twenty years ago on the Mediterranean island of Mallorca. I was intrigued by the story, and discovered when I went looking in the history books that it was well-known in France, a bit known in Spain, and unknown in the English-speaking world. So now I was curious both about what happened to the prisoners, and about why nothing had been written of them in English for almost two hundred years. Four years ago I began a detective search for the answers to these questions, which took me back to Mallorca, to the prison island itself, to Madrid, to London, and to Paris.

I started with a number of out-of-print memoirs written by prisoners who survived the exile - several of which had been best-sellers in nineteenth century France. Those memoirs gave me a harrowing picture of life on the island. But the prisoners themselves knew nothing of the higher politics that exiled them, and never seemed to ask who put them there, or why. They were simply the discards of war, telling their own story of survival.

I went next to the documentary records of the Mallorca government in Palma, who were responsible for supplying the prison island. Those records told me much about the wartime difficulties of maintaining and feeding thousands of unwanted prisoners of war, but still nothing about how the Frenchmen got there. The local government in Palma hadn't wanted the prisoners in the first place, and only wanted to get rid of them. It dumped them on Cabrera because it had no power to do anything else.

From Palma, I went to the Spanish national archives in Madrid, and to the Public Record Office in London, seeking answers to the mystery. For the British and Spanish, who were the eventual winners of the war against Napoleonic France, the story of Cabrera was a terrible and

preferred to ignore and forget it. (For example, the great British historian of the Peninsular War, Sir Charles Oman, devoted only one short paragraph to Cabrera in his eight massive volumes. Without citing any evidence, he blamed Spain for having put them there. I suspected that was not correct.)

Fortunately Spain and Britain kept their original records of the war, their military despatches, their diplomatic and cabinet documents - and those gave me my answers. The book is the first account of the story in English, and the first in any language to explain why the French prisoners were treated as they were, and by whom. As a detective, I had the satisfaction of solving the case.

In 1808 Spain was already a subordinate ally of the Emperor Napoleon. There were about 100,000 French troops in the Iberian peninsula when Napoleon decided to depose the Spanish king, Charles IV, and to install his own brother Joseph Napoleon on the throne of Spain. The Spaniards - who were, and are, a proud people - didn't like that, and within weeks there were popular uprisings against the French throughout the peninsula. We can perhaps understand what the Spanish might have felt in 1808 if we imagine how we would react if President Bush were to announce that he has appointed his own brother, Governor Jeb Bush of Florida, as the new king of Canada, prime minister, and commander-in-chief of our armed forces. Whether we would respond as boldly as did the people of Spain, I'm not so sure. Anyway, they rose against the French, and Napoleon found himself fighting a vicious war he had not expected, a war that lasted for six years and ended with his defeat and abdication in 1814.

(You may be familiar with some of the incomparable pictures of that war painted and etched by the great Spaniard Francisco Goya, which have ever since been the emblematic depictions of the horrors of war. Several of them are reproduced in the book.)

When the Spanish provinces rose in revolt, Britain at once came to their support, and British troops under the command of Arthur Wellesley, later Duke of Wellington, sailed south to join the continental war against the French. Napoleon's commander in Madrid ordered a French army of 20,000 men to march south into Andalusia to occupy the strategic port of Cádiz. But as they marched, the Spanish were raising their own army, and in July 1808 this Spanish force defeated the French divisions under General Dupont at the battle of Bailén. Dupont surrendered.

But 20,000 prisoners of war were something the new Spanish army could not handle. At this early stage of the war, the Spanish commanders had no central government to direct them, and no organized means of caring for the prisoners. The entire country was in a state of near-anarchy. So the surrender agreement negotiated with the French called for the prisoners to be marched across country to Cádiz, placed on Spanish sailing ships, and returned with most of their arms to the French port of Rochefort. The long forced march began in the heat of a Spanish summer - but the prisoners believed it would end with their return to France as free men.

For Napoleon, the defeat at Bailén - his first major military loss - was a shameful humiliation. He wrote to his brother Joseph in Madrid: "Dupont has stained our flags. What incompetence! What baseness!" And the perceptive emperor put little faith in the terms of surrender. "I do not suppose," he advised his minister of war, "that it is necessary to make great preparations at Rochefort, because the British will surely not let these imbeciles pass, and the Spaniards will not give back their weapons..."

Napoleon was right. The British, whose armies had now arrived in Portugal and Spain as allies against the French, would not allow the Spaniards to send their prisoners back to France - because they feared the soldiers would soon return to Spain as fighting men. The surrender agreement was betrayed. Instead, the Frenchmen were marched very slowly south to Cádiz, where they were put onto hulks in the harbour. They remained on the ships, ill and dying, for four months.

Early in my research, I came to the conclusion that the British, not the Spanish, were responsible for betraying the terms of surrender. But I lacked any direct evidence of that, any "smoking gun," and for a long time my hunch amounted to nothing more than speculation. I believed that because it was clear the Spaniards wanted to be free of their prisoners, because the British were the dominant partners in the wartime alliance, and because the British proconsul in the Mediterranean, Admiral Collingwood, had no respect for the surrender agreement. But still I lacked any proof. The manuscript of the book was already in my publisher's hands before I found the evidence: a letter from the British minister of war, Lord Castlereagh, to Admiral Collingwood, explaining why Britain had to put its own military interests ahead of the solemn promises made to the French prisoners. (This was perhaps one of the reasons why Britain was known in France as "perfidious Albion".)

As an historian, it was satisfying for me to search out and finally discover the evidence that confirmed a hunch - and to get it to the editor in time for publication. It probably helps to explain why the incident has not been examined in the British history books. That is not to say that there was censorship or suppression of the evidence that Britain was responsible (it is all there in the archives for anyone to see), but rather to recognize the inclination to pay less attention to the dishonourable aspects of one's own national history - especially if the incidents occurred in the margins of the main story, as they did in this case.

By the spring of 1809, Cádiz wanted the stinking prison ships removed from the port. In April, five thousand of the French prisoners were put onto sixteen transport ships and despatched, under Royal Navy escort, to the island of Mallorca. When the convoy reached Palma de Mallorca, the local government refused entry to the prisoners, out of popular fear of infectious disease and of the thousands of potentially turbulent French intruders. Instead, the prisoners were taken twenty-one miles south to a barren and uninhabited island. Here is the book's description of their arrival:

Most of the soldiers had not stood on land for four months, since they boarded the hulks in Cádiz on Christmas Day, 1808. Now, as they waded ashore from the ships' launches, they had neither guards, nor instructions, nor knowledge of the island to guide them. They could see no dwellings and no signs of human life. Mallorca was behind them and out of reach, a low line on the northern horizon. The Elysian prospect of safe refuge there had vanished in the wind. They were alone on Goat Island.

The first prisoners to touch shore on May 5 were in a state of near-delirium. Many were ill, and all were weak, light-headed from the lack of food, and unsteady on their feet. They were relieved to be off the transports, but confused and disheartened by their presence on this bleak and unknown island. Beyond the calm turquoise waters of the bay, what confronted them in the dusk was a forbidding prospect of rock, broken shale, and scrub brush rising into the hills on all sides. The men gathered on the strand according to their units, and began to explore in search of inhabitants and shelter for the night. Some of them made their way up the slopes of the central valley, scrambling anxiously over shale and brush. Unusual blue-black lizards dodged into hiding as they approached. Other prisoners climbed to the castle above the harbour entrance, where they discovered signs of recent habitation, and space for perhaps thirty residents. By nightfall, as the temperature fell, the soldiers met grimly at the base of the valley and built bonfires. Henri Ducor recalled "a thousand fires" burning throughout the makeshift camp, "a strange and moving spectacle, that must have amused our guards in the fleet.... For us, they were funeral torches that illuminated our graves!"

Next morning, in the harbour, the prisoners retrieved the cooking pots and utensils they had used on the ships, which had been left onshore before the transports departed. The materials were divided among the regiments; but for the moment they were useless, since their captors had left no food. On the second day, a barque arrived from Palma carrying basic supplies: hard biscuit, rice, lard, and bread. But the crew treated the prisoners "as if we had the plague": while the provisions were unloaded on the beach, the Frenchmen were kept at bay by armed guards. With this first shipment, the Mallorcan authorities established the prisoners' basic rations:

for enlisted men, a pound of bread and a handful  
of beans or rice, a little oil, and a little salt each day;  
for the higher ranks, double the basic ration plus  
occasional supplies of raw vegetables, meat, sugar,  
coffee, oranges, and wine. For the common soldiers,  
this was a starvation diet whose suspension, even  
for short periods, would result in many deaths...

From the harbour the prisoners could see only "a shapeless mass of almost inaccessible crags." Cabrera rose from the sea in a jagged outline of low, brush-covered hills and valleys, with forested stands of white pine in the east.

One of the prisoners described the island: "It is a vast rock covered by a thin and sterile layer of soil. There are no fruit trees, no green plants, nothing that will supply the necessities of human life...There is no foliage, aside from a few miserable pine trees fringed by briars. Its arid mountains shelter no wild animals."

And there they remained - for five years, until the armistice of May 1814. During that time there were frequent shipments of more prisoners to the island, until a total of 12,000 had arrived on the rock, without adequate food or clothing, with insufficient water, without guards, supervised only by a dyspeptic Mallorcan priest. The prisoners finally erected their own dwellings, built a theatre, established a theatre company to perform the French classics, and recreated a rough and primitive society with a surprising range of occupations and business enterprises.

A few of the Frenchmen escaped, some transferred into the Spanish army as another way out, many died of starvation or untreated disease, there were reports of cannibalism, and at the end of the war in 1814, the 3,700 who remained were finally repatriated to France.

The book tells the story of their five year effort to survive, to escape, or somehow to get off the barren rock - sometimes through the eyes of prisoners who wrote memoirs afterwards, and sometimes through the eyes of the Spanish and British authorities who condemned them to this purgatory and watched their life from offshore. The record reveals not only their despair, but also their amazing endurance and ingenuity.

Without doubt, they were mistreated in horrifying ways, the result of official betrayal, indifference, neglect, confusion, and the absence of any international standards or rules relating to the treatment of prisoners of war. A further sixty years passed before the Brussels Declaration of 1874 on the treatment of prisoners, which was amplified in the Hague Conventions of 1899 and 1907. The disasters of the two world wars resulted in the Geneva Conventions of 1929 and 1949, which have finally established binding international law on prisoners of war. But even those efforts often fail to guarantee the rights of prisoners in practice, as we see today at Guantanamo Bay, where war prisoners from Afghanistan, some of them taken by Canadian soldiers, are held not as prisoners of war but as "unlawful combatants" or "material witnesses", and denied the legal rights promised them under the Geneva Convention. Once again, as in 1808, civilized and lawful treatment of prisoners has taken second place to the self-defined interest of a great power.

The island of Cabrera has been a Spanish national park and nature reserve since 1991 - and because it remained mostly uninhabited after 1814, it still has the look that it had for those unfortunate soldiers. It is both harsh and stunningly beautiful for visitors who are not under internment on the island. A Mallorcan writer described it this way after a visit in 1906. Cabrera harbour, he wrote,

...is so beautiful, so tranquil, so clear and protected from the winds, that it seems more like a lake than a corner of the sea. No port in the Balears compares to it, and a day will come when its beauty and freshness will be recognized to create a summer residence and a sea-bathing place that will be an enchantment, surpassing all others in this so beautiful Mediterranean...Its air is so pure that it restores health to all who breath it...

There is a daily summer boat service to the island, and it is worth a visit if you happen to pass that way. I know from experience that the national park guides will treat you kindly onshore.

(Denis Smith's book, *The Prisoners of Cabrera: Napoleon's Forgotten Soldiers, 1809-1814* is published in Canada by Macfarlane Walter & Ross, and in the United States by Four Walls Eight Windows. It is available in bookstores, or by order on the web from Chapters/Indigo, Amazon, or Barnes and Noble.)

**GEOGRAPHY and HISTORY of THE COBOURG,  
HAMILTON TOWNSHIP and PETERBOROUGH AREAS**

by  
**John Jolie**

**T**his report covers two presentations: the October talk to the Society and our May Field Trip. The 22 topics discussed will be subdivided under the two headings of "Geography" and "Local History."

**Geography:**

1. Geology
2. Ice Ages
3. Cobourg to Rice Lake
4. Galesburg
5. Warsaw Caves Conservation Area
6. More Post Glacial Lakes
7. Eskers

**Local History:**

8. Danforth Road
9. Cobourg-Peterborough Railroad
10. Ball's Mill
11. Oak Ridges Moraine
12. Harwood
13. Rice Lake Bridge – Zimmerman – T.C. Clarke
14. Rice in Rice Lake
15. Keene
16. Lang Pioneer Village
17. Clues to Directions
18. Peterborough
19. Lakefield
20. Kivas Tully
21. Warsaw
22. Trees, Schools and Roads

**Geology:**

We now know about continental drift, the idea that the continents are floating on hot convection currents rising up from deep within the Earth. The continents have always moved, and are still moving, at about the speed our fingernails grow. In terms of our lifetime, that movement is insignificant, but over a period of hundreds of millions of years those fingernails would grow to span oceans! So what does that have to do with Cobourg?

A half billion years ago, the ocean off the east coast (Iapetus Ocean) was slowly closing up. Africa was bumping into us! That collision folded sediments from the ocean floor and created the Appalachians. That movement also caused the land in Southern Ontario to bend

downwards, a depression into which sea water flooded. Massive deposits of calcium carbonate (like the deposits found in a kettle) and mud accumulated on that shallow sea floor. Our area was much warmer then – like the shallow waters off the Bahamas. The seas evaporated, leaving shale and limestone sediments. This is our area’s bedrock. These rocks have fossils which are evidence of the life from the Ordovician Period. Fossils such as brachiopods, crinoids, trilobites and gastropods are clues for dating the area’s early history.

Today, that bedrock is mostly covered by glacial and water deposits, but you can find exposed outcroppings where water erosion has swept away those loose deposits (see Figure 1).



Figure 1: Wave-swept limestone terrace. La Cloche Island (next to Manitoulin Island). John Jolie photographer

Look along the shoreline of Lake Ontario and in stream beds such as the Ganaraska. The bedrock has parallel cracks running across it. Some fractures look so straight that it appears as if they had been sawn. These lines are called joints. You can see these geometric forms running into Lake Ontario at the end of Darcy Street or at Lookout Park at the base of Coverdale (see Figure 2). At one time, the limestone was much thicker and highly compressed. However, hundreds of millions of years of erosion has removed many layers. With all that weight released, the rock has risen slightly, enough to crack and cause the joints to form. That gray rock has been used in some local building foundations and is quarried at Lakeport for the cement industry. There is also an abandoned quarry outside Lakefield. Locally, a few buildings have been constructed of this rock, including the “barracks” on Orr Street.





Figure 2: Jointed limestone at Lookout Park (Coverdale). John Jolie photographer.

In Cobourg, we are situated near the northern edge of the Ordovician rocks. These rocks, in turn, lay on top of the older Precambrian rocks which form the foundation of our continent. To reach this underlying Canadian Shield here, it is necessary to drill through a few hundred metres of the rock. These Ordovician rocks thin out as we move northward, and past Peterborough they are so thin they expose the Canadian Shield. Some of these Precambrian rocks have a Cobourg connection: the iron ore deposits mined from these ancient rocks near Marmora were shipped through Cobourg's harbour.

Between the limestone rocks and the recent glacial deposits on top, is a time period of about 400 million years. There are no deposits during all those years. Why not? The reason is that, as our region was above sea level, erosion – not deposition – occurred at that time.

The research in deep geologic studies has gained impetus in recent years as technology allows us to read the geology far below us. It was often thought that fault lines run through the Great Lakes. (Most big lakes, worldwide, are now proving to be located in rift valleys.) Recently, scientists in submersibles have found the suspected fault lines in Lake Ontario, and disturbingly, they look recent. This is causing some discussion as nuclear power plants have been built along the shore of the lake.

We have had some minor earthquake activity in this area. Early settlers on Rice Lake reported tremors which broke up the lake ice. There has also been instances when Lake Ontario's water levels have experienced sudden changes. Wind did not appear to be a factor. Some believe these changes were caused by regional earthquakes..

**The Ice Age:**

Flash forward 400 million years to the last million years. We have been in a period of recurring glacial advances, which may not be over. A generation ago, we were taught that there were four glacial periods, but now it is suggested that there were far more than that. (Glaciers don't play fair as every advance destroys the evidence of previous visits.) On flat land the ice acts like a bulldozer, flattening and filling.

The ice sheets had sections, or lobes, whose advances were steered by depressions in the land, such as that in which the Great Lakes are. In the Cobourg area, the ice lobe came from the direction of Kingston. The clues are scratches or striations in the bedrock made by sand or rocks embedded in the ice. The scratches all run east-west.

North of Rice Lake, we find striations on the rock which run north-south, meaning that the ice lobe in Peterborough moved north-south. Glaciers push and carry enormous amounts of debris. When the lobe from the north met the lobe moving from the east, the piles of bulldozed material met, with nowhere to go. This created the enormous Oak Ridges Interlobate Moraine (Great Pine Ridge), the second largest land form in Southern Ontario, after the Niagara Escarpment.

Now that the moraine was in place, when the glaciers melted, huge amounts of water flowed off the ice masses. Some water flowed onto parts of the Oak Ridges Moraine, leaving water deposits on top of the unsorted glacial debris. You may remember seeing sand along Highway 28 as you come to the final rises before descending to the lake plain west of Bewdley. Those high sand hills were deposited from water (and wind) flowing or blowing off the glacier.

Before glaciation, we can surmise that regional rivers flowed southward. We know this because the bedrock tilts in that direction. When the Oak Ridges Moraine blocked the natural flow of water, a lake built up behind the moraine. This became Rice Lake. It filled up until it found an outlet – the present day Trent River at Hastings. The islands of Rice Lake are all drowned drumlins. There will be more of that shortly.

The Oak Ridges Moraine holds huge amounts of ground water in its sand and gravel. Rainfall helps to keep the water levels up, but we must never forget that the bulk of the water has been there since the glaciers melted, and that the water is finite.

Many streams in the township start as springs at the base of the Moraine. The ground water is higher beneath the hills and water simply leaks out of the hillsides. Ground water migrates and if one individual extracts water, the neighbour's water will seep into that "cone of depression" (see Figure 3). Any large user of water could easily be extracting water from neighbours. Also critical is the location of dump sites around Cobourg. Toxic substances must be kept from mingling with the ground water.

When the Ice Ages were ending, they lost their ability to move the glacial till. Some material was piled at the edge of the ice lobes, or was washed into the crevasses, where it became concentrated. However, the glacier was still spreading during the winters and rolled over the frozen debris. The advancing ice shaped the debris, rounding it and streamlining it. This created hundreds of spoon-shaped hills, called drumlins, from Highway 401 in the south to past

Peterborough in the north. In fact, the Peterborough region has the largest concentration of drumlins in Canada, about 6000 in all. These deposits are unsorted, telling us that flowing water did not form them. The blunt end of the drumlin tells glaciologists that the ice was pushing from that end, a clue to the direction of the flow of the ice (see Figure 3).

Near Lake Ontario, the drumlins have been altered. Cobourg's drumlins were surrounded by water as the glaciers melted, making them islands (much like those in Rice Lake today). Deposits in Lake Iroquois built up, so only the very tops of these hills were exposed. We cross them constantly, hardly noticing the slight rises beneath us. Where are they? Some sites include the hill at the Golden Plough, the hill at the east end of Elgin Street, St. Mary's High School, and even at the southeast corner of King and Darcy Streets. (Putting water towers on drumlins to create water pressure has been an inadvertent use of the features – an early water tower was at King and Darcy, and our newest tower sits on the drumlin feature north of the Golden Plough.)

The Ice Age ended. The glacial melt water flooded huge areas of Canada. The Great Lakes were much larger than now. In our area, the Lake Iroquois shoreline reached to Creighton Heights, as evidenced by sand deposits at the base of the hill. If you follow the 170 metre contour line on a topographic map, you are following this area's old shoreline, or "strand." (Toronto's Casa Loma sits on that same shoreline.) You will note the many sand pits at that elevation.

Lake Iroquois dropped in several stages (see Figure 4), each time leaving shoreline deposits as clues. Each time the water level in the lake dropped, more of the lake bottom was exposed, creating the lake plain to the south of the 401. As you travel south on Division Street, you drive over another shore deposit at Knechtel's. When the traffic lights were put in a few years ago, the beach sand was exposed there. If you watched the reconstruction of downtown King Street in 2000, you may have seen the sand deposits upon which our downtown rests – clues that this site was once on the lake bottom. A final shoreline (highly altered by man) can be seen running across Donegan Park. The present day Lake Ontario is the leftover of what was Lake Iroquois.

At the time of early settlement two hundred years, the poorly drained, flat terrain of this lake plain was a big factor in the Cobourg area being "the cedar swamp," as it was known then. Since then, ditches, drains, and deforestation have caused the ground water levels to drop, lessening the drainage problem. However, in many homes and businesses there is still a need for sump pumps.

### **Cobourg to Rice Lake:**

As we travel north across the 401 Highway, we can easily see the rise in elevation beyond the Danforth Road (Creighton Heights) (see Figure 5). This is also part of that old shoreline. Turning west along the Danforth, a hundred metres west of Highway 45 the road descends into the Baltimore Creek flood plain. This small stream, part of the factory Creek system, meanders through this valley. In postglacial days, this valley and that of the Larchmere Golf Course east of #45 were bays of Lake Iroquois.

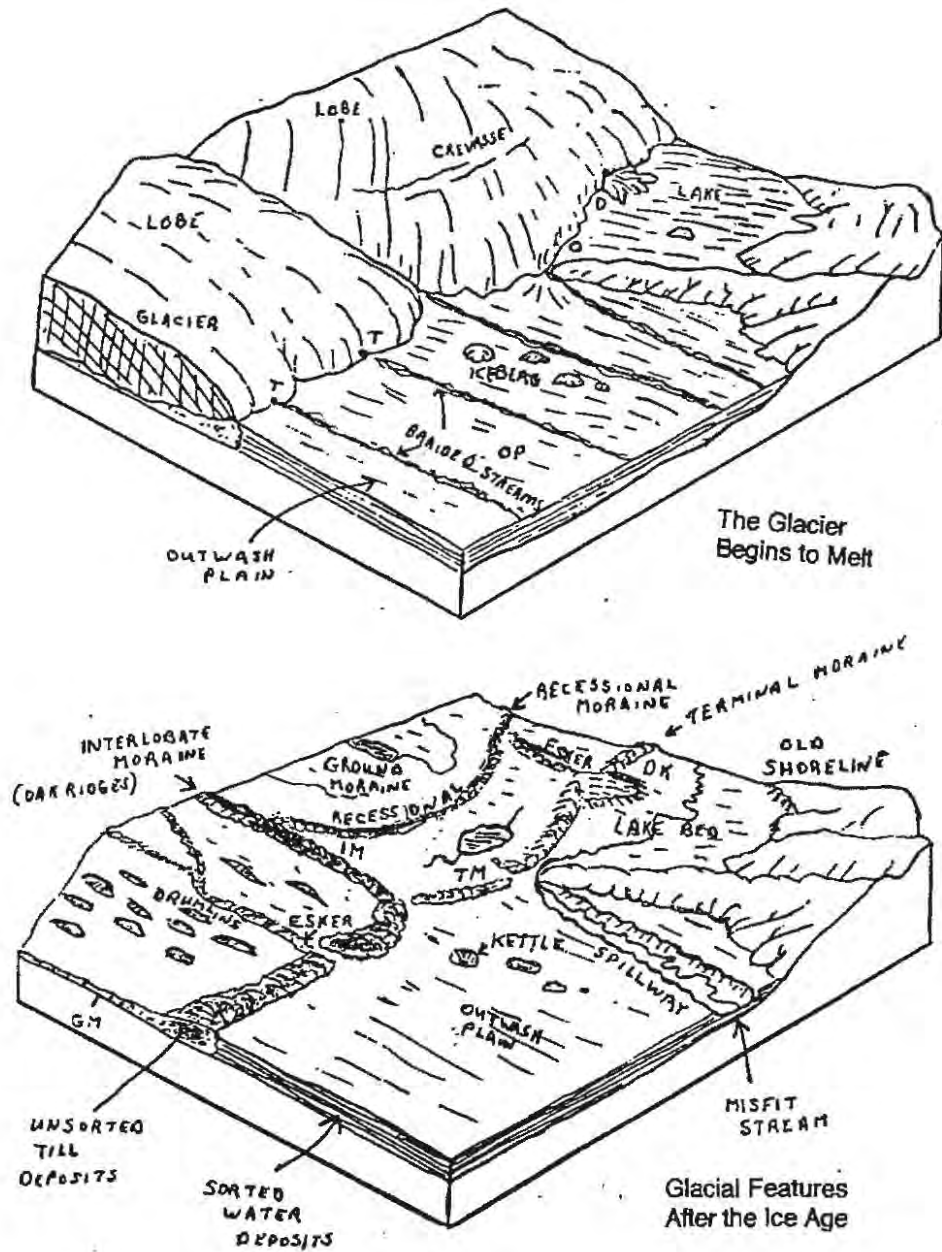


Figure 3: Glacial Features.

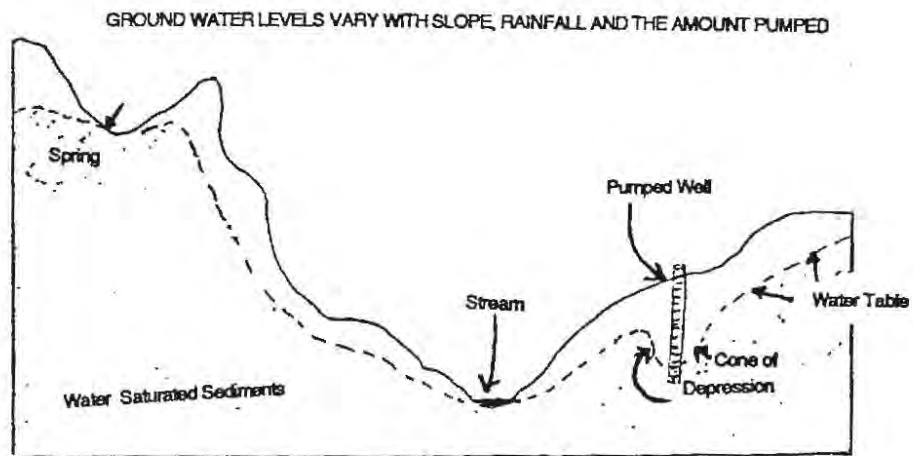
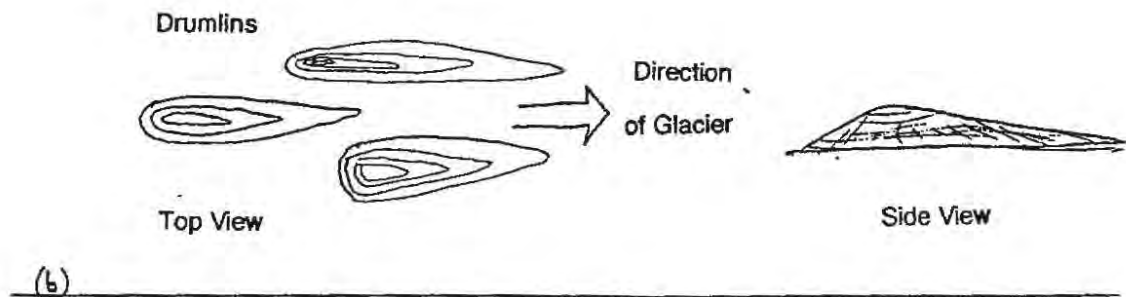
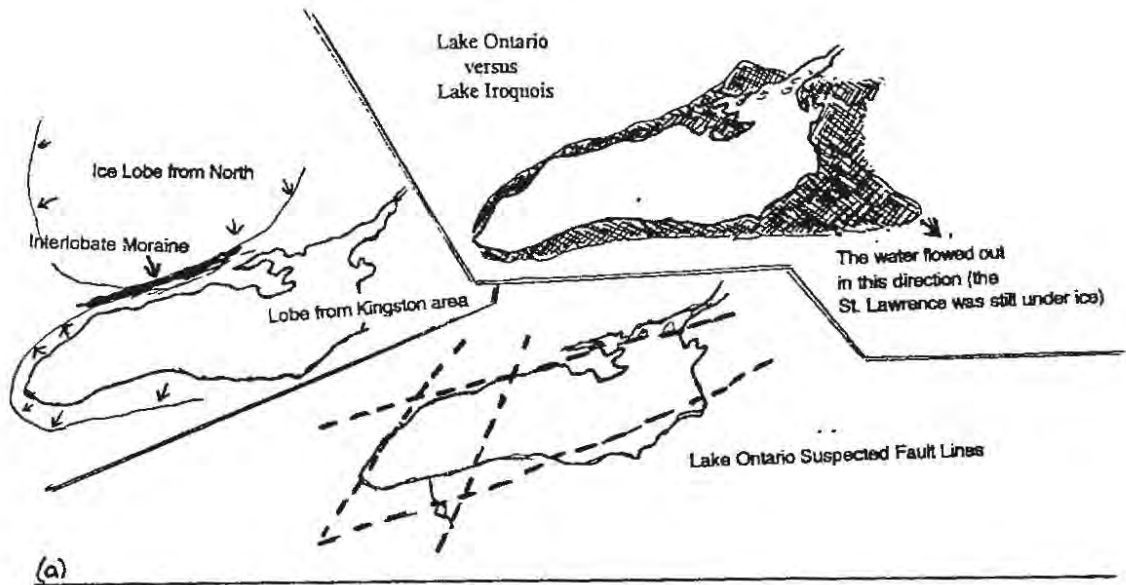


Figure 4: (a) Lake Ontario versus Lake Iroquois; (b) Drumlins; (c) Cone of Depression

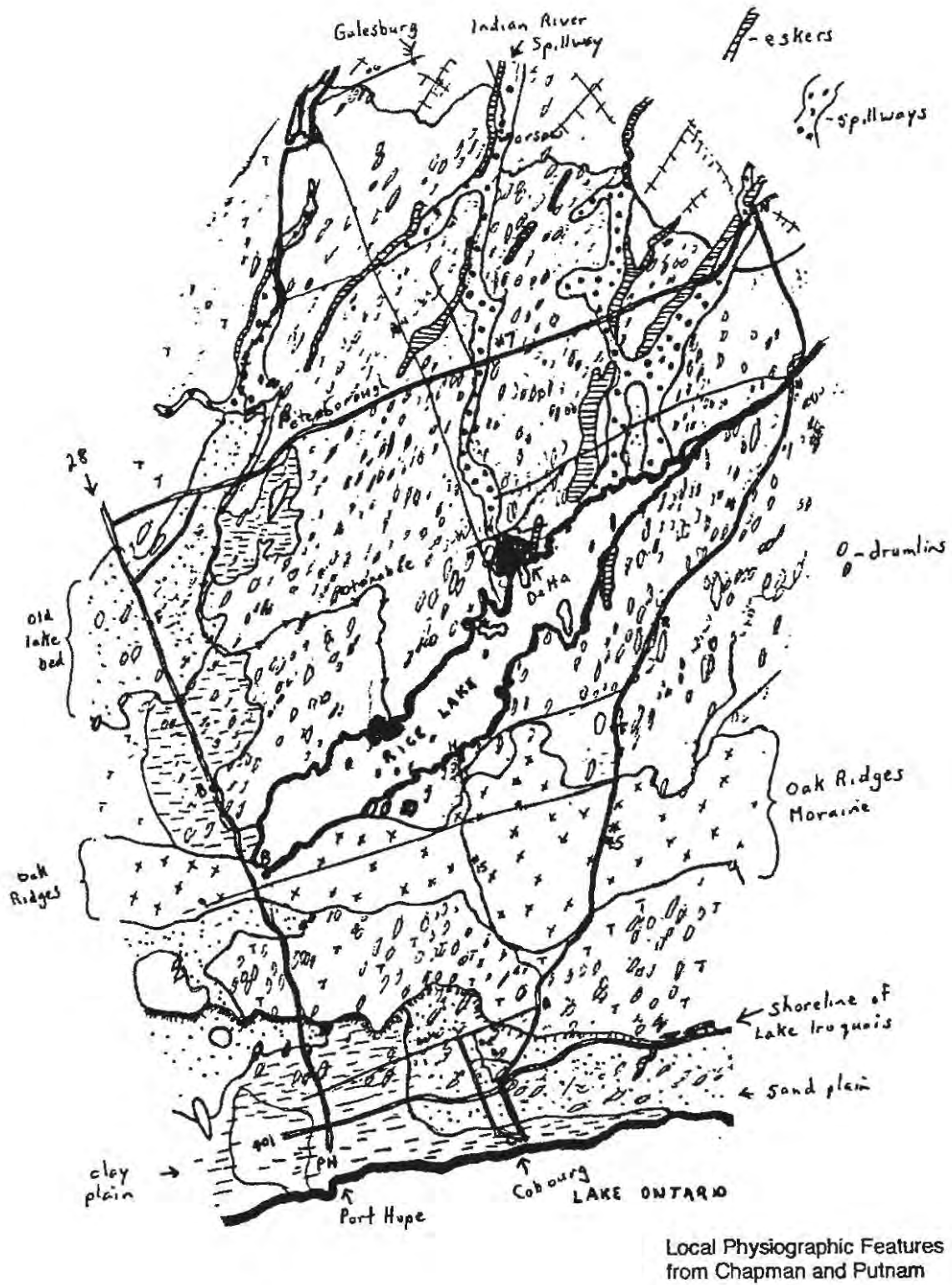


Figure 5: Local Physiographic Features. Redrawn from Chapman and Putnam.

The Oak Ridges Moraine, described previously, runs across Hamilton Township. After turning off the Danforth on to Harwood Road, we began to travel over the moraine. In this area we can see the evidence of the glacier action which bulldozed material into two bulges, or lobes, one of which moved from the Kingston area, the other down from the north. The two lobes met south of Rice Lake. The rocks and sand, pushed in front of the ice, piled up and became confined when the two lobes met. During the warming period, water poured off the glaciers leaving water-sorted materials on top of the unsorted glacial till. Most streams in the area start here, leaking from the base of the moraine. Also, note that land use varies according to slope, soil type, and drainage.

Travelling up the rise, there are good views of the Rice Lake drumlin islands with their typical upside-down spoon-shape.

Turning westward towards Highway 28, we travelled along the spine of the Oak Ridges Moraine. We descended into the valley of Rice Lake, entering marshland at the western end of the lake. This was once the lake bottom of a larger Rice Lake.

From Bailieboro, we turned east to cross the drumlin fields of Peterborough County. South of Keene, we examined the large delta forming at the mouth of the Otonabee River. It was pointed out that Rice Lake is filling up with silt. The shallow water allows light to reach the bottom, stimulating aquatic growth, and producing a good environment for fish. Indeed, Rice Lake is renowned for its fish catches, ranking it at the top for yields in the province.

### **Galesburg:**

Galesburg exists now as only a name on a map. It is halfway between Lakefield and Warsaw on County Road 6. What is interesting are the exposed layers of rock along the road. Layered limestone, much like our bedrock along Lake Ontario, lays atop very old Canadian Shield granite. There are millions of years of rocks missing between the granite and the limestone; that gap is called an "unconformity." The rock was either worn away or was never there – the area may have been above sea level, allowing the material to wear away.

### **Warsaw Caves Conservation Area:**

When the glaciers were melting, huge volumes of water flowed off the ice sheets. Large rivers created spillways, wide valleys. There are three such spillways north of Rice Lake alone. Sometimes, the only water left in these wide valleys is a tiny stream; that is, a "misfit" stream which did not create that valley.

Warsaw Caves is in an old spillway, in which you find the Indian River. Flood waters once roared across the Warsaw Conservation parkland. Most of the soil was stripped off, making the worth of properties much less. The cracks in the limestone were widened and smoothed by the flow of water. Before the parking lot was put in, that area was mostly barren rock. Rain water now flows into, not across the terrain. Water dissolved the limestone, creating caves. The area has many short subterranean passageways, including one under the parking lot.

Our walk to the caves revealed limestone slabs tilted in a V-shape, through which the path naturally followed. This is where the caves have collapsed. Water then seeps into the broken bedrock, creating a "dry valley" (see Figures 6 and 7).



Figure 6: Dry Valley at Warsaw Caves Conservation Area. Water worked into joints. Erosion widened the cracks to form caves. The caves collapsed, tilting the bedrock. These dry valleys are common in cave areas. John Jolie photographer.



Figure 7: Dry Valley at Warsaw Caves Conservation Area. John Jolie Photographer.



The caves have neither stalactites nor stalagmites, "icicles" formed as water slowly drips into caves. Here, we had rushing floodwaters from the melting glaciers rather than an environment with dripping water accompanied by evaporation. Despite that, the park has an interesting terrain. There are several little potholes, circular depressions cut into the rock by whirlpools. Further inside the park is a large pothole, perhaps a metre and a half in diameter, high above a cliff (see Figures 8, 9 and 10).



Figure 8: Looking down into pothole. This pothole is on top of the cliff; therefore the river must have been above the present valley. Potholes are made by rocks caught in eddying currents which grind down the limestone. John Jolie photographer.



Pothole Made by Rocks swirled in Eddying current



Figure 9 (left): Pothole. John Jolie photographer.  
Figure 10 (right): Pothole from below. John Jolie photographer.

The Indian River actually disappears for some distance in the park, continuing beneath our feet. In places, we can hear it running beneath us.

The caves are not designed for tourist excursions as there are no steps, ladders or lights inside (remember to take a flashlight). The passages drop or rise, some are blocked by fallen rocks. There are small seams of black rock in the limestone; this is flint (chert). The caves are delightfully cool in the summer. Kids love them! Warsaw Caves Conservation Area is one of the most pleasant places to witness nature in our area.

The Indian River delta in Rice Lake has already been mentioned. Now we can add to that part of the story. The sediments that have been deposited have now moved down the Indian River. Some of the material once covered the now bare rocks at Warsaw Caves. That missing soil has created the delta in Rice Lake.

### **More Postglacial Lakes:**

We have already identified the postglacial lake bed on which Cobourg and Port Hope rest. The area south of Peterborough is also on an old lake bed. The flat terrain, once drained, has been ideal for land uses such as runways at Peterborough Airport, the Highway 7 bypass, and industrial parks. The hills on the plains are drumlins, rising out of the old lake beds. Those old lakes are called Lake Peterborough and Lake Jackson by glaciologists.

### **Eskers:**

When the glaciers were melting, rivers flowed on, through, or beneath the ice. They carried whatever rock or sand that was in their path. That material was deposited in long, winding ridges of gravel, great material for modern construction. The sorted, concentrated deposits are highly prized by gravel companies. We travelled alongside an esker as we travelled from the caves to the village of Warsaw.

## **Local History on Our Field Trip**

### **Danforth Road:**

At the base of Creighton Heights, we turned off Highway 45 and travelled along one of Ontario's oldest roads, going back two centuries (the Danforth, in Toronto, is the same road). Asa Danforth was paid to build this road, with instructions to construct it a fair distance from the lake. This would prevent an easy seizure by unfriendly forces from across the lake. It may have been marginally more secure, but settlers preferred to be along Lake Ontario. Danforth Road never attained the use for which it was intended. Instead, the Kingston Road (Highway 2) became the main east-west route.

### **Cobourg-Peterborough Railway Route:**

The Cobourg-Peterborough Railway used the flat stream valleys as the easiest route. You can follow the line of cedar trees, growing through the stones in the rail bed, or in other areas, the embankments rising above the plain to show what was once here. On Dale Road, just west of Baltimore, one can see the embankment protruding out into Baltimore Creek valley. And as we approached Harwood, it was easy to spot the path of the railroad running to the left of the main road.

**Ball's Mill:**

In Baltimore, at the turn to Harwood, is Ball's Mill, a nicely restored heritage site. One can walk upstream along the road to see the raceway, a channel designed to build up a greater force of water heading to the mill. The demise of the Cobourg-Peterborough Railroad and deforestation adversely affected the vitality of the mill.

**Oak Ridges Moraine (Great Pine Ridge):**

The Oak Ridges Moraine was the centre of one of the Province's first conservation programme. Much of the Oak Ridges, or Great Pine Ridge, was opened up for farming, especially after World War One. Returning soldiers could receive liberal allowances to start farming. Trees were cut and land tilled on predominately sandy soil, leaving no anchor for the soil on hilly sites. Rainfall caused massive erosion. Not only was farmland ruined, but also silt filled up the stream beds, lessening their capacity to hold as much water. The area had repeated floods. To address this, the province bought up much land and planted the Ganaraska and Northumberland Forests. The Province's conservation authorities evolved partly from this experience (and Hurricane Hazel).

**Harwood:**

The railroad from Cobourg made Harwood anticipate a bright future. It began as a hamlet called Sully. There was a tavern, a prerequisite for any community in those days. One may be more understanding of a tavern's great historical status if we take into account the fact that water, not booze, was often dangerous to drink. Water-borne diseases, such as cholera, often made "Adam's Ale" suspect.

In the election of 1836, Sully became the place to vote for those on both shores of Rice Lake. Elections were rowdy affairs. There was no secret ballot, an intimidating atmosphere to say the least. One group managed to raise a sunken boat from the Otonabee and used it to ferry supporters from the north shore. Upon landing, the thirst of the electors was quenched by barrels of free whiskey. "Of course, some scenes of violence accompanied these copious libations, but happily no lives were lost." Colonel Alexander McDonall won (Poole 1941:39).

**Rice Lake Bridge -- Zimmerman -- T.C. Clarke:**

The five kilometre bridge-causeway which once crossed Rice Lake ranked among the longest of such projects in the world, to that time.

The North American frenzy of railroad construction was comparable to the recent telecommunication companies' boom -- over-optimism and over-expansion. Ontario had a prominent railroad developer, Samuel Zimmerman, who was involved in many projects. Using political connections, he was able to obtain provincial loans for communities who wanted the status of having their own railroad. Of course, Zimmerman was the contractor for each of these. The route across Rice Lake may have been the shortest way to Peterborough, but that is the only positive thing that could be said about it. The lake bottom oozed with mud, not a good site to lay foundations. The rock piled around the wood cribs needed constant replenishment.

The spans above the water were "Burr" trusses which combined a strong triangular configuration with arch designs. However, combining these two types of construction weakened the strengths of each type, but it was not that which destroyed the bridge. After the bridge went through costly and constant repairs over the next five years, even the optimists admitted defeat.

In 1862, ice took out the bridge. As the dam at Hastings has raised the water levels in Rice Lake, the wooden, rock-filled cribs, now hidden by the higher water, play havoc with inattentive boaters.

Zimmerman did not last long either. A train on which he was a passenger derailed on a bridge over the Desjardins Canal near Hamilton. He was one of the 70 who died in the collapse (Thompson 1987).

Our Society Archives has a copy of the government investigation into the demise of the Rice Lake bridge. The report was written by Port Hope's Thomas Curtis Clarke, who became a world-class bridge builder. A provincial plaque describing his accomplishments stands at the south end of Lent's Lane in Port Hope. Further information is contained in Jim Leonard's presentation to the Society.

**Wild Rice:**

Natives harvested wild rice from the shallows of Rice Lake. This continued until the dam at Hastings raised the water level. Others have suggested that pollution has also effected rice harvesting.

**Keene:**

The village of Keene was founded by an early Cobourg doctor, John Gilchrist, who opened the first store. A second store soon followed, also run by another ex-Cobourger, Dougall Campbell. The village has an interesting clock tower in what was once the Township Hall. Each of the four sides gives a different time. The township fathers, confident in a bright future, built the hall and had the times painted on clock faces. Real clocks had to wait for a more prosperous time, which never came.

The north shore of Rice Lake was difficult to reach. There were initially no roads to Peterborough, and boat crossings were operated by persons who could charge whatever they wanted. There are several accounts of people drowning in their attempts to cross Rice Lake. The area did not thrive.

The road south from Keene goes to Serpent Mounds. Time limits kept us from making it a stop this time, but it is well worth a visit. Rice Lake is the location of some old archaeological sites, revealing some of the earliest human presence in the province. During the early Woodland Period, Serpent Mounds was a Native burial site. The largest mound in the park winds like a snake, and smaller mounds resemble eggs.

**Lang Pioneer Village:**

This was the centennial project of Peterborough County. It is the site of the David Fife homestead. In the early 1840s, David Fife sent for samples of wheat from his native Scotland, hoping for a hardier variety. One sample arrived, but it wasn't any better. Another sample was sent and during the winter of 1841, it was stored in a warehouse in Cobourg. During the next spring and fall, the grain was sown on the Fife farm. The existing wheat was ruined by rust disease that year, but Fife's spring variety resisted the disease. After a few seasons, David Fife had enough grain to sell to his neighbours. The variety was named Red Fife Wheat. Later, scientist Charles Saunders developed Marquis Wheat from the parent strains of Red Fife and Hard Red Calcutta. That grain and its offspring varieties coped well in the West, allowing our

Prairies to become one of the world's breadbaskets.

**Clues to Directions:**

Folklore tells us that you could find north by knowing that moss grows on the north side of trees. That is not exactly true. In a forest, sunlight is usually filtered by other trees. Therefore, it is not a sure thing that moss knows it should be on the north side.

The space age has provided us with better clues for directions. Communication satellites high above the equator are moving fast enough to keep up with the rotating Earth 40,000 kilometres below. From where we stand on Earth, it appears to us that those satellites are stationary. Satellite dishes on homes are aimed at a satellite "parked" above the equator. If you start to walk following the line of sight provided by the satellite dishes, you will head south-west in the direction of Chicago! (P.S. Good luck in getting to where you really want to go!)

**Peterborough:**

We did not do justice to Peterborough on this excursion. However, we did have lunch and visit the new Canadian Canoe Museum.

Cobourg and Peterborough have countless ties. The Peter Robinson settlers camped on Cobourg's beach on their way to Peterborough. Of course, our railroad went there. Henry Calcutt, an early business man in Cobourg, constructed a brewery at Little Lake and a flax mill in Ashburnham. Both areas are now part of Peterborough.

Peterborough once was compared to Rome. This was because the town site was built on seven hills (drumlins). The Seven Hills of Rome are somewhat better known. Today, both cities have expanded well beyond those defining characteristics.

Just north of the downtown, we find the Peterborough Armoury. In front of the building is the war memorial designed by Walter S. Allward who also designed our great monument of World War One at Vimy Ridge (Borg 1966: 369-70). (See Figure 11.)

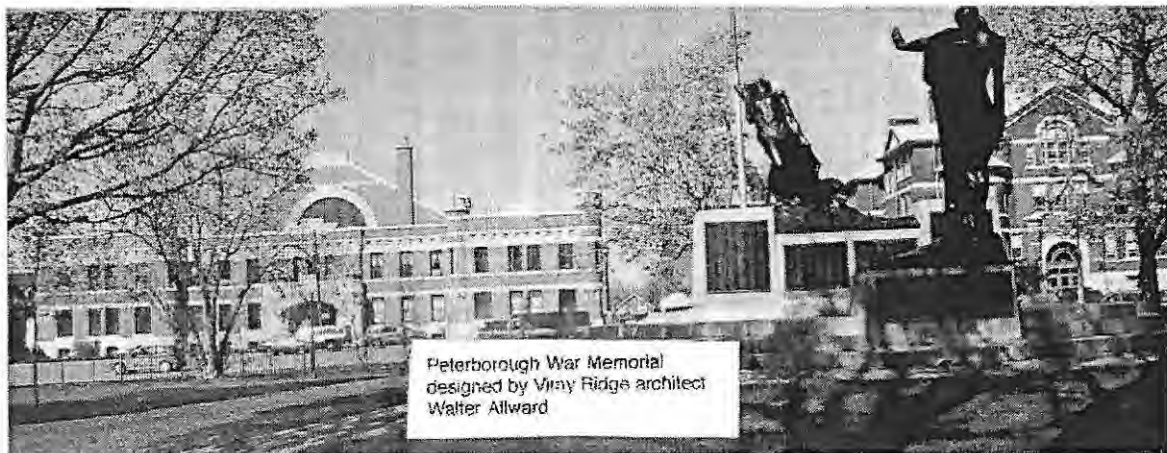


Figure 11: Peterborough War Memorial. John Jolie photographer.

Throughout this region there are many brick houses. One would expect that the vernacular, or local building style, would use wood, the region's first export. However, the revenues produced by the lumber exports to the U.S.A. were so lucrative that using up that resource for local wooden houses was not in the interests of the economy (McIlwraith 1997:93)..

**Lakefield:**

This village is on the Otonabee River, above Peterborough. This picturesque little town once had a significant limestone quarry operation owned by Canada Cement. This company was a consortium put together by Max Aitken, New Brunswick's Lord Beaverbrook.

Lakefield is also the home of Lakefield College where Prince Andrew went to school. It was also the home of renowned author Margaret Laurence.

**Kivas Tully:**

We, as members of the Historical Society, recognize this person as the architect of Cobourg's own Victoria Hall. Tully was also responsible for Cobourg's St. Peter's Church, our original Post Office on the south-east corner of King and Division Streets, and the Market Building behind Victoria Hall. Tully's accomplishments reach far beyond Cobourg. On this trip we paused to look at St. John's Christchurch in Lakefield (Figure \*\*), built by Tully. It opened on Christmas Day in 1854. Tully had married into the Strickland family, the first family to settle in Lakefield. (Two famous Strickland family members were the pioneer authors, Catherine Parr Traill and Suzanna Moodie.)

Beyond our area, Tully designed the Welland County Court House, restored the damaged St. Andrew's Church at Niagara-on-the-Lake, Osgoode Hall in Toronto, Auburn State Prison in New York State, the Ganaraska Region Archives Building (the former Registry Office) in Port Hope, and was the principal architect for the Hurontario Canal Project.

**Warsaw:**

In 1834-34, a saw and grist mill was built along the Indian River, on the property of Zaccheus Burnham. The village of Warsaw was formed after these mills were established. The Burnhams were one of the early families who left their mark from this area [Cobourg] and all the way up into Peterborough County.

**Trees, Schools, and Roads:**

Very often we pass by man-made features without a thought. For example, you can sometimes see very old, decaying hardwood trees lined along old township roads. Initially, farmers cleared the land right up to the road, maximizing crop land. The result was a treeless landscape, providing no shade for summer travellers. Then, in the 1870s, there was a lament about snow blowing right across roadways, leaving no base for sleighs to glide on. By 1883, farmers could be paid 25 cents for each hardwood they planted along roadsides and lot lines (see Figure 12).

Schools used Arbour day to bring nature to the classroom. Students went out onto the school lot (typically one acre) and planted "useful" trees, such as fruit or nut varieties, on the property (McIlwraith 1997: 250-51).



Figure 12: Oliver's Lane with century-old trees lining the road. John Jolie photographer.

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## HISTORICAL SNIPPETS

by

**John Jolie**

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### ☞ September 2002 – Number 165 – Advertisement

September's Snippet was an advertisement for a Dominion Day Excursion which offered the public "Four Hours Delightful Sail on the Lake – ON – STEAMER ONTARIO NO. 1" which was to "Leave Cobourg 2.00 p.m. – Returning Arrive Cobourg 6.00 p.m. (Standard time)." on "WEDNESDAY, JULY 1<sup>ST</sup>, 1925." For entertainment there was to be a "Splendid Orchestra for Dancing" while "Light Refreshments, including Sandwiches, Ice Cream, Tea, Coffee, Milk, Soft Drinks, etc., may be had on board the Boat." Tickets for this outing were \$1.00 for adults and 50 cents for children. Tickets could be obtained at the "City Office, Cobourg, or (at) the Wharf." This excursion was organized by the ONTARIO CAR FERRY COMPANY and the CANADIAN NATIONAL RAILWAYS.



### ☞ October 2002 – Number 166 – The Diversey Building

The Diversey Building – also known as the Perolin - Bird Archer Building – situated on Albert Street just south of Quigley's PRO Hardware store, has a long history. The Town has recently purchased the building for the price of the required environmental clean-up. The outside of the building complex reveals that the walls, doors, and windows have been altered continually to accommodate the needs of the time. The taller, three-story structure was used for the mixing, storing and transporting of the chemicals used to clean boilers, especially by railway companies in maintaining their steam locomotive engines.

The oldest part of the building was actually a portion of Faraday Hall [the science building of Victoria College] which had been dismantled and moved to the site. Another wing was used by the Grand Trunk Railroad as a workshop. During the Great War, the older part of the building was used as a plant to fill artillery shells. After the First World War, the building was rented, and then, purchased by the Bird Archer company. A laboratory was added in 1951, and offices in 1956. These are the newer buildings which abut the sidewalk along Albert Street.

At its peak, over five million pounds of chemicals were shipped out from the plant. The large amounts of contaminants, including asbestos, are problematic to restoration of the site.



### ☞ November 2002 – Number 167 – An Interesting Coin

As the Second World War raged, the Royal Canadian Mint in Ottawa struggled to cope with coin and metal shortages. The metal, nickel, was in such great demand for armaments, we did not have enough to produce our five-cent nickel coin. In 1942, our nickel was made out of tombac, a copper-zinc alloy. As the colour resembled our one-



cent coin, it was shaped with 12 sides to avoid confusion. In 1943, a rather unique design, the “V for Victory” coin, was minted. It was made of tombac the first year, and then chrome-plated steel planchets were used in 1944 and 1945. Take note that the “V” stands for both “Victory” and the value of five cents in Roman numerals. The torch symbolized victory through sacrifice.

The border on the coin also is unique. Instead of denticles (little teeth) around the coin, the Morse Code was used. The dots and dashes spell out the alliterative phrase: “We Win When We Work Willingly.” The mint would have trouble doing that today. They did not bother with a French version back then. The wartime adoption of the 12-sided coin lasted until 1963 when round coins were introduced in an effort to offset the excessive wear and tear on the presses which mint the multi-sided coin.



☞ **January 2002 – Number 168 – Hold Up Those Walls (Part One)**

**W**hen people designed taller buildings, there was always the problem that the weight of the building might cause the walls to bulge outwards. All larger buildings must be designed to counteract that pressure. Victoria Hall is one example. Have you noticed the medallions along the walls? These hide the large washers which are attached to stainless steel rods. The rods run inside from one wall to another and were installed when the Hall was restored. These will help ensure the long term stability of the Grand Old Lady of King street. The texture and colour of these ornaments match the sandstone walls so well that it is hard to believe that those medallions are made of fibreglass! Historical Society member and former mayor, Angus Read, was purported to be instrumental in having these installed.



☞ **February 2002 – Number 169 – Thomas Gillbard Public School**

**O**n February 19<sup>th</sup>, 1931, the halls of Gillbard were abuzz with what happened to them. The Dominion Bank of Cobourg was held up by three armed robbers. The trio put the bank employees in the vault and made off with \$2000. The robbers neglected to lock the vault and in short order the alarm was raised. The robbers ran up Division Street, where the first thief was apprehended. The remaining two were chased down James Street, where the second surrendered. The last robber ran through Thomas Gillbard Public School before being caught on George Street. The students had a good story to take home that night.

\* It was the philosophy of the day that bank employees should not give up bank money easily. The male bank clerks even took target practice in the basement of Cobourg’s Dominion Bank.

\* Today there is real concern that the only public school in the historic district of Cobourg may close. The students who are bussed into town tend to end up at schools on the fringes of Cobourg. New provincial funding formulae based on student numbers and a school’s square footage hurts the older, more spacious buildings. It is a troubling development for those families who live in the catchment area and for those who would like people to live in a vibrant downtown core.



**☞ March 2002 – Number 170 – Hold Up Those Walls (Part Two)**

In an earlier newsletter (January 2002 – Number 168), it was pointed out that the medallions on the walls of Victoria Hall were installed to hide the washers at the ends of steel rods. Many of our churches have high walls which also require support. Buttresses serve that purpose. Even though we do not have the flying buttresses which are found on European cathedrals, we should not ignore what we do have. Have a look around. St. Peter's Anglican Church on King Street East is a good example with buttresses on the outside which are lined up to meet the interior trusses which support the ceiling. Inside and out, these features make the church an architectural delight. (Please don't let this distract you from the service!)

**☞ April 2002 – Number 171 – Our Boundary Boys**

This month, on April 2<sup>nd</sup>, a new border line was defined in Canada: the sea boundary between Nova Scotia and Newfoundland. I have always found boundary lines fascinating. People from Cobourg have had roles in drawing up significant borders. When the Alaska Panhandle Boundary dispute was raging at the time of the Klondike Gold Rush, six persons were chosen to resolve the dispute: three Americans, two Canadians, and one British judge. One of Canada's judges was Chief Justice Joseph Armour of Cobourg. You can see his portrait in the courtroom of Victoria Hall. (However, he never lived to see the end of the case.) As you may remember, we wanted a salt water outlet through the Alaska Panhandle and when the British judge sided with the Americans, we lost any chance for a port north of 54°40'N.

In another dispute, a father and son, Thomas and John Henry Dumble, were part of the team of surveyors who sorted out the Maine-New Brunswick border lines.

As an aside, the Thomas Dumble house, "Dromore," on George Street is one of the town's more distinctive homes. The heavy barge board trim and steep pitched roof make the house a good example of Gothic Villa design.

**☞ May 2002 – Number 172 – The Cobourg Connection**

A letter from John Glanfield of Surrey, England related that Colonel Wilfrid Dumble of Cobourg was one of the four individuals called upon by Winston Churchill in February, 1915, to build a "land battleship" to break the stalemate on the western front. That, of course, resulted in the tank. Before the war, Dumble had been working as a general manager of London's largest motor bus fleet. After the war, he came back to Canada to be a magistrate and command the Cobourg Militia. Dumble died in 1963.

Wilfrid Dumble's father, John Dumble, was an Irish engineer and lawyer who came to Cobourg in 1844. Information about Glanfield's book, *The Devil's Chariots* is available at [sales@haynes-manuals.c.uk](mailto:sales@haynes-manuals.c.uk)