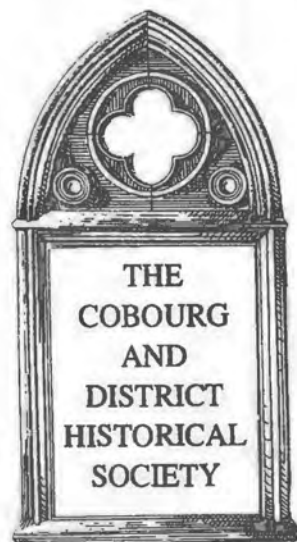


# HISTORICAL REVIEW 20



**2002**



**2003**

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**THE COBOURG AND DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
PROGRAMME OF SPEAKERS  
2002 - 2003**

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**Cover Photograph:**

**The Cobourg Kiltie Band 1940:**

<b>Front Row</b>	L to R: John Henley, Alf Rollings, Alf Carter, Dennis Pittuck, Joe Goldring, Fred Hempstead Sr., Bill Medhurst, Fred Hempstead, Jr.
<b>Middle Row</b>	L to R: George Rorabeck, Alan Eagleson, Bernie Taylor, Lyle Brown, Ross Henry, Fred Boswell, Art Hilliard, Reg Jackson, Bob Hilliard
<b>Back Row</b>	L to R: Bill Fennel, Tommy Fennel, Gerry Croft, Bill Skitch, George Niles, Clifford Earle, George Jacobson, Jim Taylor

## BARNs: OUR DISAPPEARING HERITAGE

by  
Dr. John Carter

American author and historian Eric Sloane is well known for his publications dealing with reverence for the past. As he has correctly pointed out, barns as a part of our built heritage have been neglected and overlooked, and at best remain a curiosity for many. Sloane has argued succinctly that barns are a sign of a good life and ought to be remembered.

The preservation of barns and outbuildings in Ontario is a challenge that faces municipal heritage committees (formerly local architectural conservation advisory committees), historical societies, archives, heritage centres, and museums across the province. As we drive along the concession roads and highways, the number of abandoned farms, crumbling outbuildings, and collapsed barns present us with a stark visual reminder of our rapidly vanishing rural roots.

Can we really comprehend the architectural importance or the historical significance of these structures? Can we truly empathize with the struggles that our ancestors experienced in the design and construction of these massive wooden structures? Do we recognize the true social importance of a barn raising or the position of esteem that an expert barn framer held in the community when his skills and expertise were called upon to erect these buildings?

In an editorial published in the *Canada Farmer* of January 15, 1873, the importance of farming was underlined:

Agriculture in its several branches has been, and is now the foundation on which rests the entire industrial fabric of Ontario. On its prosperity all classes depend - and with a good crop or a bad one, business operations, the abundance of money, and the social comforts of our whole people rise and fall, as do the waters of the sea with the flow and ebb of the tide.

Some heady stuff then, but unfortunately with the passing of time the magnitude of the importance of an agricultural society in Ontario has greatly changed. This should then be a call to us for collective action!

Our combined task should be to help preserve the remaining vestiges of our built rural heritage in any way that we can. While we cannot hope to physically save all barns and related agricultural outbuildings, we should at least make the best effort possible to accurately record these resources. All local heritage groups should begin to develop an inventory of barns and outbuildings in their immediate vicinity. A camera, video camera, tape measure, and a tape recorder are some of the tools required. A ring binder with photos and relevant historical and

architectural information is a useful format for compiling and preserving this research. Raising awareness can be facilitated through this process, one that has already been followed by historical societies on Manitoulin Island, in the District of Kenora, and in Lambton and Wellington counties.

Considering designation of barns and rural landscapes is another possible course of action for municipalities and their municipal heritage committees to take. This has been done for barns and farmsteads in the Region of Waterloo, Region of Peel, and Oxford County. More municipalities should designate their rural built heritage resources as local heritage groups proceed with documentation projects.

While nineteenth century barns and outbuildings may have become redundant because of the technological revolution in today's modern agricultural, an concerted effort should be made to find other uses for these structures. In several cases, non-agricultural uses such as an antique shop, art gallery, theatre, winery, gift shop, or residence have resulted in the complete recycling of former barns. Such decisions have infused new life and purpose into these buildings which in many cases had been threatened with demolition.

Raising awareness of the plight of our rural built heritage resources is another way to assist with their preservation. The Education Committee of Community Heritage Ontario (CHO) and various municipal heritage committees, museums and local heritage/historical societies, have recently sponsored workshops on these topics. Slide presentations, lectures and discussions have broadened the awareness of participants to lend a hand in this important task.

The challenge remains to proceed with a systematic process of recording which could lead to designation, preservation, or the reuse of barns and outbuildings throughout the province of Ontario. Such initiatives might result in good news about barn raisings instead of barn razings! A worthy initiative that we should all consider.

**Dr. John C. Carter** is a museologist and historian who has documented the barns and agricultural buildings of Ontario for more than 20 years. He is the chair of the built heritage committee of the East York Historical Society, and a former executive member of the Toronto Preservation Board.





**Figures 1 - 4:**

Upper Left: Lakeshore Road, south of Grafton. Photograph by Max Bennett.

Upper Right: 14896 Old Highway #2, just west of Brighton, County Road 2. Photograph by Max Bennett.

Lower Left: Opposite 12612 Old Highway #2, just west of Colborne County Road 2. Photograph by Max Bennett.

Lower Right: Silo in Murray Township (Ward). Photograph by Max Bennett.



**Figures 5 - 7:**

Upper Left: 14952 Old Highway #2, behind residence west of Brighton, County Road 2. Photograph by Max Bennett.

Upper Right: 12269 Old Highway #22, now a residence between Colborne and Grafton. Note painted cow. Photograph by Max Bennett.

Left: 115 Main Street, Brighton, now an office behind Vreeburg residence, west of Centre Street. Photograph by Max Bennett.



**Figures 8 - 11:**

Upper Left: Located behind residence at 101 King St. East, Colborne. Photograph by Max Bennett.

Upper Right: Tobacco kilns. Godolphin Road, south of Warkworth. Photograph by Peter Greathead.

Lower left: 100 Honey Line. Note cat sitting in frame-less window. Photograph by Peter Greathead.

Lower right: 5635 County Road 25. Photograph by Peter Greathead.





**Figures 12 - 16:**

Upper Left: Racetrack Road. Photograph by Peter Greathead.

Upper Right: Racetrack Road. Photograph by Peter Greathead.

Centre: 12164 County Road 24, east of Roseneath. Photograph by Peter Greathead.

Lower Left: 12708 County Road 24. Photograph by Peter Greathead.

Lower Right: 208 Honey Line. Photograph by Peter Greathead.

BUFFERS, BOUNDARIES & BARRICADES: COUNTY FENCES

by  
Ruth Clarke

There's a saying that a picture is worth a thousand words, so in this book of photographs, I reckon there are the equivalent of 60,000 words. Actually there are only four pages of text, which would make for a short reading. However, I have heard great fence stories, rural legends and speculations in my travels since the book was published this spring, and have woven them into my travels since the book was published this spring, and have woven them into my own musings on the subject to share with you.

We have in this province a great cultural heritage: FENCES, and while the photographs speak for themselves, they have become a point of departure in conversation. They seem to encourage readers or viewers to share their own stories of fences.

In the next few moments, I will tell you why I chose the subject of fences to photograph, how the book evolved, and what I've learned along the way.

A range of emotions played a large part in getting me started on this project. The first emotion I felt was smoldering, unspoken rage-when I saw someone sawing off a piece of a root fence near where I lived. Sacrilege, I thought, an act akin to vandalizing a cemetery. When I'd calmed down, my feeling changed to nostalgia. These fences needed to be documented before they were all hacked away.

My original intent was to photograph only the fences of Northumberland County where I live – which I did for a couple of years – until I couldn't ignore other fine examples that exist. Then it became a project: people started leaving messages on my voice mail, giving me instructions to unusual fences. I was on Fence Alert! Some people got confused and pointed me in the direction of gates. A friend in Bath took me to places near Black River in Prince Edward County, to unusual stone fences which are included in the book. I have since learned that the militia had built these fences in the 1890s. Why, I wondered. Was there a depression? I continued to ask the question aloud during the course of readings and recently, one man suggested that it had been peacetime and building fences would have kept the men in shape. We continued to look at the design of the fences. They weren't very high; a soldier could kneel behind them, lift one of the upright slabs from the top of the fence and very neatly rest a rifle butt in this space in case of attack. Since that time, I have met the granddaughter of the family who owned the farm in 1907, when the fences were firmly in place and the granddaughter remembers how challenging it was, trying to run along those stone fences.

Nostalgia took me to fences in Bobcaygeon where I was born and I was fortunate to get some shots of the magnificent stonework containing the Boyd and Henderson estates there, before all the stones had been pilfered. In a town set on limestone, one would think people could content themselves with chipping away at it, not stealing fieldstone from ancient, storied fences!

In trying to flesh out an introduction to accompany the photographs, I researched in libraries, at Lang and Black Creek pioneer villages and on the world-wide-web. On the Internet, I found an abstract of a paper from the University of New York by Christina Kotchemidova entitled, "A History of the Meaning of Fences in Culture." She writes, "the fence helped early societies' transition from living off looting the land, to living by taking care of it..." She notes that the second King of Rome first enacted laws on the boundaries of estates...that in Medieval Europe, the fence indicated lawful property; and its dismantling was punished by limb mutilation." I wouldn't have gone that far, but understand the sentiment.

One very valuable resource was Harry Symon's book entitled, *FENCES*. In his introduction, Symons defines the ideal fence to be "horse-high, bull strong and skunk tight". He writes that a squire in Caledon township specified that a brush fence – the precursor to the root or stump fence – to be legal "must be 40 feet wide and damned high" to prevent either cattle from going through or pigs going under them. Symons defends our most-fenced province with an interesting point: While Ontario may have the most fences, it also suffers least from soil erosion. Our fence lines and the trees that were planted or grow wild along them have laced our landscape together in more ways than their original intent: to contain livestock.

While I haven't elaborated on the how-to aspect of fence building, what I did find has proven useful to some fence-builders already. In a passage entitled "A Chapter on Farming" in Moore's *Rural New Yorker*, published in 1860, a farmer from the northwestern United States writes about the construction of fences: "A post should never be put into the ground in a green state." The end that is put in the ground should have no bark on it, and should be charred one-quarter inch deep, a foot above and a foot below the ground. Both practices allow water to evaporate from the wood and the post's pores to close. Charring also absorbs gases, discouraging decomposition.

Now, I'll read from my brief introduction to *Buffers, Boundaries and Barricades: COUNTY FENCES*:

*In your mind's eye, remove all the roads, factories and houses from this manicured countryside, and try to imagine living in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when most thoroughfares other than footpaths were the waterways of rivers, lakes and creeks. When land, more often than not, was a portage for the First Peoples. Their physical fences were the elaborate, utilitarian traps of pounds for bison and caribou, and weirs for migrating fish. Invisible, but agreed upon, boundaries separated tribal hunting grounds, trap-lines, fishing waters and rice beds. All of these respected boundaries were maintained down through the generations, upheld by stories of bloody, ancestral battles fought before the lines were drawn. They were battles the First Peoples did not want to repeat.*

*In the mid-1800s, our European ancestors arrived here to start new lives. These settlers, too, knew fences. They knew the boundaries and divisions imposed by religious and*

*political wars of persecution waged in 19<sup>th</sup> century Europe. They fled to begin again in the New World where trees were so large their trunks were harvested to be used as masts on the ships of the King's Navy.*

*In Upper Canada, land was first surveyed in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, starting at Lake Ontario and progressing in all other directions on a grid from the shore. Each county, township, municipality, and the lots within them, was delineated and within those individual lots settlers erected their own boundaries: fences.*

*For these homesteaders, land was a source of pride and ownership. But more importantly, fences in this province were law and fence inspectors, hired by respective townships, upheld it. In *The History of North America, Vol. I*, published by Leeds in 1820, terms for settlement at that time demanded that newcomers clear and fence ten acres of their land within the first two years of their arrival. In the book, *Fences*, published by McGraw-Hill Ryerson in 1974, author Harry Symons and artist C.W. Jeffreys sketch humorous anecdotes of gentlemen in top hats strolling the countryside inspecting settlers' fences, whose height, location and size were ordered (though not enforced) by these fence line arbiters. By the look of the prosperous fenced patchwork of pastures and crops covering this landscape today, it appears that the settlers fulfilled their terms of settlement.*

*However, we know little of the hardship they suffered and less of their undying determination. If these fences could talk, they'd attest to the backbreaking efforts of their makers. They'd tell of lathered horses leaning in tandem, urging serpentine roots and entangled rocks from Mother Earth's embrace.*

*Brush fences were the first boundary lines. The settlers felled trees along proposed fence lines, and the logs were used, presumably, in the construction of barns and houses. The brush provided the preliminary fence, which was later burned when a permanent fence could be constructed. Once the trees were cleared, their roots were drawn out of the ground in the spring by a team of draught horses or oxen. Later, when it was drier and moving them wouldn't gouge unwanted furrows in the earth, the roots were arranged as effective barriers to livestock. Visitors from the Old World regarded these fences as "unsightly", but if they'd tried to grow their beloved hedgerows in this climate of extremes, they would have spent their days chasing after errant cattle and sheep during the four years it would have taken to grow living fences.*

*The successors to the root fences were constructed from either whole logs or rails split from logs and were made from virtually any wood available—even oak. The names describe their appearance or the manner in which they were made: snake, worm, stake, rider, workman, or combinations, based on available materials and manpower.*

*These fences were often erected in a flurry of construction by family and neighbours in what was called a "bee", a communal work project that was later rewarded with feasting and*



*frivolity.*

*In her research paper for Black Creek Pioneer Village entitled "Everything You Ever Wanted To Know About Fences," Marilyn Braaten writes that rail fences were found as early as 1685 in New England where they were called "worme" fences, later known as Virginia rail fences. Ms. Braaten notes that one log from a virgin forest often provided up to 80 rails and that 4000 rails were required to fence a mile of land. Doing the math reveals a significant number of trees.*

*Some cedar log fences still endure today, but most are made from split rails. The original rails or logs have shrunk considerably-one farmer reckons fifty percent - but even now, their size is impressive.*

*Snake fences had their pros and cons. One advantage was that they didn't require post-holes to be dug, and if a boundary line changed the logs could be dismantled and moved. The disadvantage was their zig-zagging or snaking, design. A snake fence line took up precious land that couldn't be farmed. However, wildlife and itinerant humanity enjoyed the windbreak they provided and both (separately, one assumes) used the lee of these fences for shelter.*

*An anonymous author, calling himself a fifth generation Canuck, in his book "Pen Pictures of Early Life in Upper Canada" (published in 1905), writes that a settler could split 1000 rails a day using an axe, a maul (or beetle) and wooden or steel wedges. "At one time," he writes, "it was reckoned that it cost \$60 to fence off an acre of ground." The rails were 11-12 feet long and each section of fencing incorporated 8-9 rails to a height of 7-8 feet. Today, the rails of these fences have settled and rotted into the ground, but in doing so, they seem to have evolved into different beings, individuals with personalities shaped by time and the elements. Their knotted, weathered textures, embroidered with moss and lichen, inspire a sense of wonder when trying to conjure up our land covered in forest, as it had once been.*

*Very few of the fences in this collection of photographs contain animals, and often the atmosphere on these back roads had a museum-like quality-I felt I was looking at agricultural artifacts. Today, fences like these offer private places for contemplation, expansive reflection on the vistas beyond, or for exploration of the minutia in a forest of moss beneath your nose.*

*When I first started this project, I followed the rules of journalism, accurately documenting the location of each fence. But there are no longer fence police (except for zoning bylaw regulators), the fences don't care, and the absence of their exact location will keep these back roads free of traffic. It doesn't matter where the fences are located. And since the amalgamation of several townships into municipalities, if I'd tried to be exact, either I wouldn't get it right or readers might not be able to relate to the new name. Let these fences be anywhere you want them to be.*



*Likewise, I had originally thought that I should focus only on the fences of Northumberland County where I now live. In part, it would be a tribute to my ancestors who settled here eight generations ago. I remained strict about my self-imposed rule until last year when I could no longer ignore the variety of fences that lace this province together. They characterize the geology of the land and the sociology of the settlers who built them. In loosening my restriction I have added several kinds of fences in Victoria County where I grew up, including one built by my family. If it was the work of my grandfather, he died fifty years ago. Also included are some examples of fences in Leeds & Grenville, North York, Peterborough, Prince Edward and of course, Northumberland counties.*

*I've learned that other people are just as fond of fences as I am. Some look at them, nodding or shaking their heads with a sense of awe or nostalgia. A friend who grew up in Scotland says some of the stone fences remind her of her homeland. Perhaps her kin built them when they immigrated to the New World. Others grow misty-eyed and appear to go back in time, imagining the settlers who built them. In today's world, we'd never work that hard, not without heavy machinery.*

*With heavy machinery, money and manpower, fences have evolved to provide specific barricades for particular needs, like the post and plank fences built to contain horses that need so see a barrier or they'll try to run through it. Most cattle pastures are fenced with woven wire (patented in 1883) or modern single wire electric strands.*

*A shot taken early in the project is the stone alley on a farm owned by Gord and Mary Park. They generously tramped me over their hundred acres on which several fence types had been built in the years before they owned it. A field beyond the stone alley is one the Parks call the "Moonscape." At the edges of the field, near a grove of cedar trees, abandoned tractor skeletons rust resolutely. The field is strewn with rocks and boulders of varying sizes, reminiscent of shots astronauts have taken on the moon. As Mary said, "It's as if they couldn't bear to lift another rock, and left it..." to be a formidable reminder of what fields had been like before they were cleared. Since then, I have met James Coveney, a farmer who knew the man whose family first settled the Park's land. "Bent, gnarled and arthritic, he was," said James. No wonder.*

*Like that bent, gnarled and arthritic settler, our bone-weary pioneers tamed the wilderness, felled monstrous trees and used them to recreate a life here. They planted crops, tended livestock and raised families. These people stayed put for generations, protecting hearth and home. They honoured their brothers and sisters who fought for this country in wartime, shown in the elaborate monument built by Alderville First Nation after World War I. Settlers also mourned those who went to early graves, as illustrated in the early ornate cast iron cemetery fences. Their fences continue to be lasting, lyrical reminders of another time in this place. These photographs celebrate and honour them.*

I hadn't realized how timely this book was when I was doing it – some of the fences have since been torn down, so they aren't lasting. Our most-fenced province is being divested of some of these fences to accommodate the large machinery used in mega-farming, and the rails are being used for landscaping urban properties with faux fences. At a recent farm auction a job lot of cedar logs, firewood and 5,000 cedar fence rails sold for \$3,200-more than the final price on the tractors! I've heard about an area farmer who couldn't understand why his cattle were getting out as his fences didn't appear to have any holes. The mystery was solved when he walked along his fence line and learned that the top rails had been removed from all the panels of snake rail fence that contained his property. Our province is being unlaced and who knows what will happen if all the laces are removed?

So for all of these reasons, nostalgic and otherwise, let us honour our fences. Long may they live in our hearts, if not on our landscape.

**MEMORIES OF VETERANS:  
Operation : Market Garden by Bruce E. Cox, Sgt. 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion  
and  
In Remembrance by Angus V. Read, O.St.J., C.D., Major (R)**



**Operation: Market Garden**

**T**hirty-five thousand men, three hundred miles behind enemy lines. This was the largest airborne operation ever mounted. This was the 1<sup>st</sup> Airborne Army. They were veterans and well-trained. Veterans of North Africa the 1<sup>st</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Army had seen action in Sicily, Italy, Normandy, and scattered amongst the volunteers were those who had served in Norway, the North West Frontier, Spain, Finland and Poland.

This army knew combat and knew the orchestration of battle. You have to listen to the music if you are to stay alive: see the flashes; watch the ground strikes; and estimate from where the fire is coming. Each weapon has its own sound, its own individual sound, for example, the German Schmeisser, the British Sten, submachine, and the heavier machine guns each has its own individual sound. German Spandau 42 and 34 firing 1200 rounds a minute, the British Bren only 500 a minute, the Vickers 250 rpm. The “thwack” of a round near you. All around you. The “plop” as a bomb leaves the barrel of a mortar, maybe half a mile away, leaving about five to eight seconds to find cover. This is the music of combat.

It had never been attempted before, and it was a devastating battle. At that time we were rolling up the German Army; the evil army had to be destroyed entirely. Regardless what the odds were it was “Stand Up! Hook Up and Go!” For that was the general feeling.

We were to be carpet-layers. We had experienced carpet-laying before, as most of us had been apprenticed in Sicily. At Primosole Bridge they, the army, were late then; why should this be any different? 30 Company under Gen. Horriks, the Guards. Armoured Division could use the carpet to move forward.

The job of the 1<sup>st</sup> Airborne Army was to get bridges over three rivers: the Mass, the Waal and the Heder Rijn by Airborne assault. This would open the way for the British 21<sup>st</sup> Army group to swing through into the plains of northern Germany, to encircle the Ruhr, to open ports of northwest Europe. This was essential because the whole invasion was still being supplied from the beaches. The “Red Ball Express” was coming all the way through from Normandy. Now the plan was for the 82<sup>nd</sup> US airborne division. Landing at Grave and Nijmegen. The 101<sup>st</sup> US Airborne Division at Eindhoven to Grave. The British 1<sup>st</sup> Airborne Division with the Polish 1<sup>st</sup> Para Brigade southwest of Arnhem Bridge.

**The Briefing:** After 16 operations had been cancelled after "D" day, this one had to go but the R.A.F. said they could not land near the town or on the bridge as it was too soft for gliders. Too heavily defended. We had to use a "DZ" [drop zone] miles from the bridge. There was no surprise. So once more into the Douglas Dakotas, our dear friend. We were on the northern lane, the 2AA Division, the south lane. I sat in the DC3 and looked out the window as far as the eye could see stack on stack of aircraft. Black and white stripes, on the way over I see two FW 190 dive through the air armada, followed by about ten spitfires. Good. That told me we have great air cover. Battalion on battalion of paratroopers, gliders also with air-landing troop, engineers, armaments of all types. A division all heading for one location in Holland-Arnhem. We were to start dropping at 2:00 p.m., my aircraft was due to drop at 2:10 p.m.

The coast of Holland. Okay running in, Stand up/hook up comes so soon. Pat says to me, "Would you change places with me, Bruce?" "Why?" I asked. "I am 13." We change, it's okay. The landing was good; I identify our red smoke rendezvous marker. All equipment okay, formed up and we were down the road. To Arnhem. Shots being fired already. Shortly we came upon a German staff car in the centre of the road. A German General hanging out one door, his driver very still in her seat. We came under some light fire but pushed on until it became heavy. In a line we went into a wood to clear them out. This is where Pat took two in his ankles, Irish luck. We cleared them out, plus we took two prisoners. My buddy and I took them back to Company Headquarters. At this point we came under heavy mortar fire, multi-barrel. I was flat, but my buddy was getting down very slowly. I knew he'd been hit. I grabbed him and we ran for cover. I got him to a ditch, out of the target area, he fell, I couldn't find where he'd been hit. I cut away his gear only to find the wound at the base of his neck. Through his jugular vein. Moments later he died in my arms. The platoon Sergeant came over. I told him the situation. Remove one tag and lets move out.

Shortly we came under mortar bombs again. In this wood the rounds were hitting trees and showering us with shrapnel. We were taking casualties. Two more in the platoon near me were hit, the two Rons – one a Cockney, short, tough, bright blue eyes. I was his best man just a month before in Spalding, Lins. I had promised his wife I'd bring him back. Number 2, was a good-looking lad from Jamaica, my boxing pal. I crawled over to them and found they were wounded on opposite sides of legs and body, I cut the pants and equipment, applied powder, dressing and then a shot of morphine in the side of the leg after which I tagged the syringe into the battle smock collar. Then I set off with them one on each side to the Aid Station. Reporting them in. Looking around I saw one of the company corporals sitting quietly in a corner, one of the boxing team – not seeing anything. There for the grace of God, go I.

That's the scary bit; I made my way back to the company. We were fired on most of the time but kept moving towards the bridge. Fire and move. Once pinned down by heavy MG 34 fire from houses on the edge of a park, we laid down a smoke screen of mortar and followed up with high explosives over the top, setting the houses on fire, we went in and



overran them. Unfortunately, our major was hit in both arms. We had used all our mortar bombs and finding a Spandau 34 MG left behind, I hung two strings of ammo around my neck, with one in the gun, re-grouping we had to move across open parkland with houses the other side. Our Platoon Officer said to me, "Cox, if we get fired on, you blast them with the 34. Then we will get down and cover you in OK?" Oh sure! I was looking for open windows, rooftops but that's how it happened. I put an entire 100 rounds through that 34, in one go. We put down heavy fire and with fire and movement got across the damn open park. From thereon it was house to house and down to the river. Moving through a brickyard we came under attack from German Infantry supported by Panzer tanks. Then a FW 190 made a few passes at us. We were being chased from one side of the brickyard to the other. We threw three phosphorous smoke grenades on one side of the yard and went out the other end. Now going house to house along the banks of the Rhine.

At last in sight of the main bridge, maybe 400 yards, but with enemy tanks and everything else in between. An Anti-Aircraft battery from across the river sent an automatic stream of fire anytime movement was seen. We tried to set up a Vicker heavy machine gun, but it was knocked out as soon as it started firing. It was now getting dark, German tanks were moving along the street again with infantry back-up. At one point I was by an alley and stepped out one second before a German stepped out the other end. I had picked up a Sten gun after using all the ammo for the 34 – I had the gun on him – he knew I had him. I could see it in his face. The Sten went KLUNK! Misfire and young Cox never moved so fast in his life – back behind the house.

There was much the same fighting the next day. Getting short of ammo but held them off. More street fighting until dark. There was an "O" group. At which I suggested that maybe the Polish Brigade would come in this way to help, if they knew where to come, could I try and find them over the Rhine. "Okay," the Platoon Sergeant said, "give it a try, off you go Cox. Do what you can."

Working my way down to the bank of the river I moved west. Hearing voices coming from a tunnel and with my Sten at the ready, the first person I saw was a Corporal from the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion. He had been ordered to take command of a river tanker moored nearby. As it was full of gas, he used the tunnel instead. I asked if there were any small boats on board. One of the Dutchmen said there was, a steel rowboat. Once we found it we were on board and had it in the water. By this time a private from the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion had joined us. The river was bright red, fire red. It seemed the whole town was burning. The river never looked so wide. I sat in the bow expecting incoming each second, the other two rowed at a speed I believe we could have pulled a water skier. As we neared the opposite bank I knew that the AA site was near. Grounding I went up that bank with a "see all" stare, to our great relief there was no response. This was the fields and dikes south of Arnhem.

Moving slowly and quiet we made the AA site. While I loaded Mills Grenades, the other two laid mines, booby traps. Moving out I came across a rifle leaning up against sand



bags. Without turning or stopping I walked backwards until out of any light or sound. Then got the hell out of there. Some 15 minutes later, just before dawn there was such a racket going on, then explosions. That day we hid in the overgrown tall grass. We were tucked away in the corner of a field. By 9:00 a.m., German troops were making sweeps in an extended line through the meadows and came within eight feet of us. Not seeing three totally scared but ready Para[trooper]s. Night came and we moved by compass and stars in the direction of Nijmegen; and I hoped our Polish Comrades. We met a 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion Officer who had stripped and swam the river. He had decided to go back. He was hiding in the reeds, cold and wet. We gave him socks, vest, food, then he asked me for one of my weapons. I had a Sten and a Canadian 9mm Browning. I refused. But the Private from his Battalion went with him.

That night we again moved towards the south getting down in a ditch around 4:30 a.m. and getting the first sleep since Jump in. We were both suffering the runs from drinking pond water. I was down to 15 rounds of 9mm. My buddy had 9 of 303. Looking out I saw a path five feet from where we were and a German private walking past us to their cookhouse and quarters only 30 feet away this was in a farm house. It was now about 9:00 a.m. without much hope of not being discovered before nightfall. We disarmed and buried all our ammo and weapons. As the German came back from the cookhouse I called him over. He raised the alarm and covered us with his rifle that he dropped trying to cover us. We were taken into the headquarters and handed over to a guard and a Sergeant Major who spoke English. He asked us, "How did you get that close to our Headquarters?" realizing that we had moved through his trenches and posts in the night. Taking us outside I showed him where we had come over the dikes, across the meadows and found the ditch by the orchard. He was really furious and we could hear him shouting at his posts and guard from a half mile away. He really laid it on his troops.

So it was the end of our effort at Arnhem. Taken prisoners and moved back to P.O.W. camps in Germany. I knew my brother was around some place, only hoping he had made it through. His unit was 156<sup>th</sup> Para Battalion and a few days later I found him in Stalag 11B; from then on we were allowed to stay together through many hard times and adventures. But that is another story.

All of the Pilgrimage jumps I go on was to honour the guys who didn't come back. Some who came back were not the same ever after. At the time we didn't have time to mourn them the way we do now! Because they are, in my mind, still there, part of the team members of the parachute regiment.

**What I feel was wrong, or went wrong:**

1. Choice of DZ;
2. Lack of surprise;
3. Should have been a “coupe de main” as in the Normandy Operation and take your knocks early, had planners forgotten the past?
4. Not dropping all 1<sup>st</sup> Airborne Division the same day – this was a deep penetration, not a shallow one;
5. A new non-Airborne Division Commander who should have insisted on the first three items or refused until fixed or feasible;
6. The inability of some officers to take intelligent advice from RAF photographs and Dutch underground;
7. The “guts” to say it as it was, regards radios and communications;
8. It was a “BRIDGE TOO FAR” for the ground troops.



**Left:** Sgt. Bruce E. Cox (see above). Photograph by Dorothy De Lisle.



**Right:** Maj. Angus Read (see below). Photograph by Dorothy De Lisle.



## In Remembrance

*When I was first asked to speak to The Cobourg and District Historical Society, Remembrance Services were still some months away. I did not tax my mind on what I might say and what my personal thoughts on Remembrance Day were. I was quite sure I had a good understanding of Remembrance, but as the time drew closer, I began to contemplate what it really was about.*

Remembrance Day, honouring the war dead, is a legal holiday observed throughout Canada on November eleventh. It commemorates the armistice which ended World War I at 11:00 A.M. of that day in 1918. Originally called "Armistice Day" (as it continues to be known in Newfoundland), it was merged with Thanksgiving Day from 1923 to 1931, when it was re-named "Remembrance Day" and its observation reverted to November 11<sup>th</sup> (*Canadian Encyclopedia*). The symbol of this day is the poppy of Flanders, replicas of which are distributed by the Royal Canadian Legion. Characteristic of Remembrance Day are patriotic and memorial ceremonies on steps of cenotaphs and other war monuments in Canada and throughout the Commonwealth. I remember the 1930s as a period of depression and drought. The veterans of World War I were unemployed and hardships were a way of life. When the November 11<sup>th</sup> services were held at the cenotaph in the town where I grew up, veterans, families, and young people like myself came to remember the 200 fallen soldiers from our community. Many of the veterans had missing arms and legs, others were very pale and frail. My parents told me these men had been gassed like my Uncle Willy. I did not fully understand, but stood in awe of these brave men.

A few years later, the second World War was declared and I saw my friends and family members who were old enough go off to war. In the early forties I watched my father leave for overseas as a member of the Lord Strathcona Horse. He was to be gone for five years.

I remember the first casualty from Virden. A young man whose father had been killed in the first World War, enlisted as a pilot, went overseas, fought in the Battle of Britain, and was shot down over England. Many more young men were to follow. Reports of "missing" or "killed in action" became a daily occurrence. In 1942, Dieppe took a toll on our town with many reported dead or taken prisoners of war.

The "D Day" landing left me with strong emotions as the men who were killed on the beach were only three or four years older than I. Some of them, with whom I had served in the reserves, had enlisted when they became eighteen years old, or even younger. I decided it was time for me to enlist. I changed my age and was accepted as a Private in the Royal Canadian Infantry Corps. I completed my training in 1945. As the war in Europe had ended, I volunteered for the Pacific Force. I was assigned to the 49<sup>th</sup> Loyal Edmonton Regiment. Completing our Americanization with Ground Rifle-60mm mortars and other equipment, we marched to the railway station in Camp Shilo on a hot August afternoon. We saw the train at

the station waiting for us to board. After about four hours of waiting, we saw the train pull out empty, and we were marched back to our quarters. The war in the Pacific was over.

I remember returning to school as a veteran to finish my education. Later, I returned to the Army as a Korean War volunteer. I qualified for officer training and became a Lieutenant in the PPCLI. A memory I was never to forget was my marriage to Bernice Daniel on 21<sup>st</sup> May 1951. After a seven-day honeymoon and tearful good-byes, I was on my way to Korea. I remember the young officers and men who I had trained, dying in Korea. We continue to honour them with visits to the Korean Monument in Brampton. Some 516 names are listed there, a number of them good friends.

After duty in the far East, I was posted to Winnipeg. I decided I might like to learn to fly as the Army was becoming more involved with transport and AIROPS. I received my Pilot's Licence but then decided I wasn't interested in flying as a career. Shortly, I was advised that I was being sent on a Parachute Training Course. These were exciting days in soldiering, we were well into the Cold War, our training was heavy on Nuclear Defence. We were training to defend ourselves against the Communists. I also recall that we had over 120 000 members in the Canadian Forces in 1950, from a country of 20 million.

In 1957, I was posted to Germany with NATO for what was to be two years but extended to three. Bernice proceeded by air with two young daughters and within six weeks our son was born in the British Hospital, Iserlohn. The memories here are of bugouts, two-week leave periods to tour Europe, but always under the threat of the Soviet Union's expansion plans. In our administration, we had a large number of German civilians who worked for us and filled many essential, and often critical, roles. We developed friendships with people who, a few short years before, our forces were killing, and theirs doing the same to us.

My greatest memories of that period came a few years later when I returned to Germany to visit friends. I called on one of the Germans, a former Captain in the German Artillery, who had been my assistant during my earlier posting. He was delighted to see me and after a couple of beers, he took me to the village of Korbecke, near the Mohne See, where a monument had been erected by the locals in memory of the Canadians who had spent time in that area. With tears in his eyes, he said the twenty years he worked for Canadians were the best years of his life. I could not have had a more loyal assistant.

In 1960, I returned to Canada to the Airborne Depot at Camp Shilo where I served as the Second in Command, and later, as Commanding Officer. This special Unit had a role in the whole defence of Canada. We were expected to be ready to move in any direction on a moment's notice.

There are special memories of northern Canada from our posting to Fort Churchill, Manitoba. Here we had a Northern training Base as well as a USA Strategic Air Command



Base. Fort Churchill was memorable for many reason's but the death of President John Kennedy threw the Americans into a Priority Red Situation. They had to be ready to take off immediately. This continued for several days, but we eventually returned to routine operations.

After leaving Fort Churchill, I returned to Airborne duties at Camp Shilo. It was there that I received notice that I was posted to 26 COD Coburg, Ontario. This was a bit of a shock as we referred to 26 as "The old men's home." I was barely settled in the job and had my family settled in when I received word that I was being posted for six months to UNFCYP with the United Nations in Cyprus. This later became referred to as "Disneyland." Things happened that you couldn't believe! I returned to Cobourg at about 5:00 a.m. in late August 1969 to be met by a loving wife and three children. At 11:00 a.m., I was awakened from a sound sleep by the Commanding Officer inviting me to a meeting that afternoon at the Depot to advise all staff that the Depot would be closed in September 1971. This was to be part of the restructuring of the Canadian Military Supply System, which proved to be not so much restructuring but more erosion of the Canadian Military.

Today we have a Military of less than 60 000 troops and 30 million people. It is not a memorable time for our service people. Let us hope that we continue to remember those who served and gave their lives for Canada and for the freedom of the World.



**FROM VICTORIA COLLEGE TO THE AGO AND THE ROM:**

**Egerton Ryerson's Road to Ontario's Public Collections**

by

**Dorette Carter**

**Curator/Director, Art Gallery of Northumberland**

When most of us in Ontario think about Egerton Ryerson we tend to regard him as the great educational reformer of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, whose influence is still felt today. While some of that idea has merit, it is not entirely true. Ryerson, who was an exceptional communicator, was foremost an adaptor and genius of modification. His constant companion in all of his work was the idea that through education a society would encourage better citizenship and that education was not just something that was taught in the classroom but in many other settings throughout a person's life.

As a young Methodist circuit rider, Ryerson had gained recognition on a provincial level for championing the cause of liberalizing the clergy reserves. His published debates with Toronto's Bishop John Strachan were eloquent arguments that still make good reading today. His defence of the work of the Methodist church won him many supporters for his still struggling religion. He was elected editor of the *Christian Guardian* in 1831 and from this post he lobbied for non-denominational higher education in the province. This work supported the establishment of Victoria College in Cobourg, which opened in 1836 as a non-denominational grammar school for both men and women. Victoria College received its charter in 1841 as a degree-granting institution and Egerton Ryerson was appointed its first principal.

Following the rebellion of 1837 and fears of republican influences in the schools of the province by American trained teachers, the Durham report (which was commissioned following the rebellion) stressed the need for rapid educational reform. Lieutenant-Governor Sir Charles Metcalf appointed Egerton Ryerson, in 1844, Assistant Superintendent of Education and charged him with writing a report that would suggest legislation which would reform the school system of the province.

One of the many issues examined by Ryerson in his report was the need to raise the standards of teaching and teacher training. During his extensive travels to gather information and ideas, Ryerson was most impressed by the Normal School system in Ireland, a country not unlike Upper Canada in its colonial relationship with England. The Irish system featured centralized control through an inspectorate and textbook distribution, teacher training at a Normal School, pro-British sentiment in all activities of the Board of Commissioners, and a non-sectarian approach to religious study.

Ryerson knew that, in Canada, teaching was viewed as an occupation much like semi-skilled labour. The qualifications of teachers were often poor to nonexistent. Ryerson firmly believed that the only way to improve the educational system was to improve the quality of

teachers. What he had seen in Ireland had greatly excited him. Not only were the student teachers instructed in new methods of teaching, which stressed Pestalozzi's object-centred learning, and curriculum content, the Normal School had its own museum for the benefit of developing more "worldly teachers." This idea took hold in Ryerson's plans for the province's first Normal School in Toronto. While it took a number of years to accomplish and persistence on Ryerson's part, it was an idea that would have effects far into the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

In an era before mass communication and even reliable photography, the world's great art works and artefacts were something that could only be appreciated by those wealthy enough to afford European travel. For his report, Ryerson toured Europe during a period of heightened interest in mass-education. The Great Exhibition of 1851 had been organized to draw attention to the formidable accomplishments of British technology and the power of her empire. What the organizers of the exhibition in the Crystal Palace had not really appreciated in their planning was the potency of the exhibitions for mass education. Commentators of the time were struck by the seriousness with which the artisan class treated the exhibits. Following the close of the Great Exhibition, a new set of "Educational Museums" were established at South Kensington to display British decorative arts and technology in a permanent home (later the Victoria and Albert Museum).

This role of museum exhibition as mass educator was very much on Ryerson's mind when he lobbied the legislature for the funds to acquire appropriate items for the "educational museum" that was to be part of the newly completed Normal School in Toronto. Ryerson believed that civilized behaviour and refinement could be developed in the working classes by simply allowing them access to works of art.

When Ryerson successfully gained approved funding to tour Europe and acquire material for the proposed museum, he met with Captain John Henry Lefroy and Sir Henry Cole while in London. Both men had been instrumental in the establishment of the museums at South Kensington and Lefroy had a Canadian connection through his father-in-law, John Beverly Robinson, Chief Justice of Upper Canada. They recommended that Ryerson should follow the method used for establishing local museums in England. These museums acquired good copies of "great masters" works from skilled artists in Europe. Now it seems almost silly that the provincial collection should begin as a collection of copies, however, it was common practice at the time, as a support to the growing system of public education in industrializing countries.

Ryerson took to his task with great enthusiasm and overspent his budget by several thousand pounds. The three-way correspondence that took place between Ryerson, in Europe, his assistant J. George Hodgins, in Toronto and the provincial treasurer John Langton at Queen's Park is very revealing. Ryerson's enthusiasm for his task leaps off the page, Langton keeps up a constant stream of complaints about how much is being spent, and Hodgins balances the two on a precarious thread. Hodgins shielded Ryerson from Langton's fury and found space for an ever growing number of crates being shipped to the Normal School.

Ryerson intended that the museum should have a very practical as well as an aesthetic purpose. As part of the Normal School, a school of Art and Design was to be established to train commercial artists as well as instruct the general population how to draw. The skill of drafting was important for the emerging industrial economy. Ryerson wanted, in his very Methodist heart, to improve the conditions of the working/artisan class. Art education was viewed as technical training necessary for illustrating industrial designs and instruction manuals.

As the province moved towards a more centralized system of education, art education could be controlled by the centralized educational bureaucracy and also by the governing classes, who as the Boards of Trade and individual manufacturers, awarded prizes for conventional industrially related artwork. Although art was also taught as a refined accomplishment, especially among young women, it was rarely taught as a liberating force in the world.

In 1857 the Educational Museum for Upper Canada was opened to the public. While Ryerson's dream of having a separate building on its own was not realized, he did have a facility that came under the control of the Department of Education. The museum had hours set aside for the admission of the general public and it was not long before many of Ryerson's initial opponents became museum supporters and enthusiasts.

Ryerson's museum collection did not remain static. In 1867 Ryerson sent Hodgins to Europe on a further buying assignment. Hodgins was instructed to purchase books, maps, charts and working models as well as art objects for the museum's growing displays. Many of Hodgins' acquisitions reflect the growing efforts throughout England to popularize science as well as art.

The Educational Museum continued to operate under Hodgins direction after Ryerson retired. Without Ryerson's strong personal vision, however, the school of art began to lobby for facilities apart from the Normal School. Dr. Samuel May, who had been brought over from the school at South Kensington to organize the school of art, was successful in making a case for a separate art school. By the early 1880s the Normal School and the School of Art had separated and some of the art collection at the museum was moved with the art school.

New directions and new facilities began to dictate the future of the Educational Museum. The Museum's collection shifted from fine art to natural science and archaeology under the supervision of museum curator, David Boyle. Boyle, who also acted as the first provincial archaeologist, had expanded the museum's quarters in the Normal School. In 1881 and again in 1903 parts of the collection were distributed to the Agricultural College in Guelph and to the Normal Schools in Ottawa, North Bay, Peterborough, Hamilton and London. The growing movement by the science faculties at the University of Toronto towards the establishment of a museum saw the opening of the first wing of the Royal Ontario Museum in 1913. The Boulton family gift of the Grange property in Toronto saw the



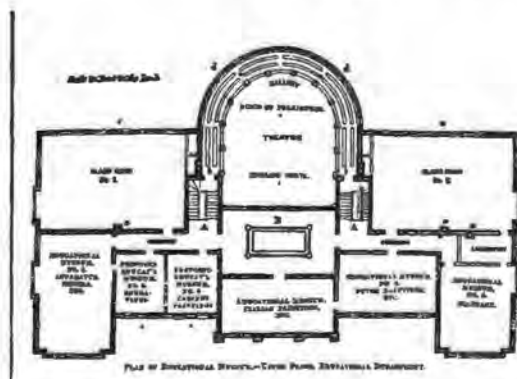
establishment of the Art Gallery of Toronto, later the Art Gallery of Ontario. By 1933 the lack of space and the duplication of function lead to an order-in-council from the provincial government to close the museum that Ryerson had founded. The remaining collections were distributed to the ROM, the Ontario College of Art and the University of Toronto.

For Ryerson, who for so many years worked towards a centralized educational system, firmly believed that education would solve many of the social ills that were a result, in part, of nineteenth century industrial restructuring, the use of a museum as a mass educator was very appealing. In a province which remained a largely rural economy up until the First World War, Ryerson's idea may well have been far ahead of its time. Ryerson believed that he could harness the spiritual qualities of art to accomplish social goals. It is difficult for those of us in the early twenty-first century to really understand his "world of wonders" and the sense of awe that people had towards the advances in science and the discoveries that were taking place in their time. The world in the nineteenth century was a treasure chest – some good, some bad – but all exciting.

The museum as mass educator has passed away in the present day of mass communication and the Internet. The legacy of Ryerson's work to acquire a public collection for the province's citizens, however, is still with us in our provincial institutions as well as community galleries and museums today.



Above: The Normal School for Upper Canada, Toronto, 1852.



Left: Plan of the galleries, upper floor, Educational Museum of Upper Canada, 1858, Toronto Normal School.

## THE PAST IS THE CONTEXT

by  
Eileen Argyris

This presentation weaves quite deliberately back and forth between the past and the present. I will begin by referring you to words I wish I had written. They come from author John Ralston Saul, the husband of Adrienne Clarkson, Canada's current Governor-General. He wrote, "The past is not the past, it is the context."

When I came from Mississauga to live in Cobourg in 1971, it was a very different place than it is today. For instance, Victoria Hall, that beautifully restored building, was sadly decayed and falling to rack-and-ruin. The town was much smaller, there was no mall, Pratt's Pond covered much of the present-day golf course land at Elgin and Ontario Streets. The north end of Division Street, where I lived, was decidedly rural. Despite its famous beach and old pavilion, Cobourg's waterfront lands were still largely dedicated to industry. It seemed Jack Heenan had always been and would always be Mayor. Our communities were part of the United Counties of Durham and Northumberland. Cobourg looked and acted a lot like the small-urban centre serving a farming hinterland, that it was. Classified ads in the local paper were for hay, baby chicks, clean fill, and events to which ladies were politely requested to "Please bring lunch."

A great deal has changed, in terms of building, growth and the mindset of the population. And, please do not think I am offering a value judgment on that change. Everyone has his or her own ideas of what constitutes progress, and I am here as chronicler, not critic. Those 30 years are now part of our history. But Northumberland's evolution - over that period of 30 years - is nothing compared to the change that was experienced by this same area in the 10 years between 1790 and the turn of the last century, 1800.

In 1790, this whole area was still mainly virgin forest inhabited by native people, Ojibwa of the Mississauga tribe, speakers of the Algonkian language, who called and still call themselves *Anishnabe* meaning 'first men.' There was a trading post at what is now Port Hope and missionaries had established an outpost there as far back as 1660, but other areas were much as nature made them. And I think it is safe to say that the influence of so-called "white" people in this place had been pretty small up to that time. The native people carried on their traditional life of hunting, fishing and agriculture, harvesting wild rice from Rice Lake, making maple syrup (a skill they later imparted to settlers). In 1790, they were living much as they had lived "since the world began," as one of their own legends puts it.

Things were about to change.

In the words of Peter Jones, son of early surveyor Augustus Jones and his native wife:



A strange people landed, wise as the gods, powerful as the thunder, with faces white as the snow. Our fathers held out to them the hand of friendship. The strangers then asked for a small piece of land on which they might pitch their tents; the request was cheerfully granted. By and by they begged for more and more was given to them. In this way they have continued to ask, or have obtained by force or fraud, the fairest portion of our territory." (How Firm a Foundation, p. 11)

Indeed, events as they unfolded, and the speed with which they unfolded, must have been dismaying, and perhaps bewildering to Canada's native people. By 1790, it is estimated that about 10,000 new settlers had arrived in what has become the Province of Ontario. That is still a drop in the bucket, when you consider the size of the area we are talking about, and the fact that there are at least half again as many more people than that, in Cobourg alone, today.

Even before 1790 however, winds of change were in the air. The ominously named "Gunshot Treaty," more properly titled The Bay of Quinte Purchase of 1787 had conveyed the rights to the lands along the north shore of Lake Ontario between the Carrying Place and the Etobicoke River to these white-faced strangers. The treaty lands extended inland "as far as a gun could be heard on a clear day." The strangers were preparing; they knew that there would be many, many more to come. But whether the native people, or the newcomers themselves could ever have envisioned the development of the Greater Toronto Area, I leave to your conjecture.

During and after the American Revolution, or War of Independence, the United Empire Loyalists began arriving on these shores. The area we now know as Northumberland did not receive the earliest of these settlers - they mainly went to the Niagara region, although some settled at the Bay of Quinte. These Loyalists, Americans who remained loyal to the British Crown during the revolution of 1776-83, had suffered reprisals from their patriot neighbours, and many left the new republic. Some were seeking adventure, some undoubtedly were motivated by the possibility of economic gain. But that they were loyal they soon proved by their continuing adherence to British institutions, laws and ways.

In 1793 these settlers started arriving here to create the communities we now know as our home towns.

The townships and districts had been laid down the year before by decree signed by John Graves Simcoe, first Lieutenant-Governor of the province of Upper Canada. To the Lake Ontario shoreline near the boundary between Cramahe and Haldimand Townships came Joseph Keeler, a land agent and "Late Loyalist" from Vermont, bringing with him a likely band of settlers for the area. They probably travelled up the Lake Champlain waterway, along the St. Lawrence River, into Lake Ontario, past the tiny settlements taking root along the Bay of Quinte, and along this shore to their destination.

Keeler, it is said, had been to the area before. In 1789, he had come on a scouting party, scaled the highest promontory of land, now the hill known as Kelwood, which is situated just opposite and west of the entrance to present-day Hoselton Sculptures. He climbed a tree on that land and, based on what he saw, he made the decision to uproot his family - which had been six generations in the American Colonies - and bring them, and other willing homesteaders, to this virgin country. Attracting other settlers - the fabled forty families - in return for large grants of land, was the job of the land agent.

Joseph Keeler and his son and grandson, both also named Joseph, played a seminal role in the settlement and development of the area. Joseph Abbott Keeler, son of the first settler, is credited with being the founder of Colborne. It was he who named the village after his friend, Sir John Colborne, Lieutenant-Governor of Upper Canada from 1828 to 1836. (As a footnote, York, now Toronto, in 1828 had a population of 2,200 souls, just a little larger than present-day Colborne.) The third Joseph Keeler, grandson of the first settler, served as Member from the riding of Northumberland East in Canada's first Parliament from Confederation in 1867 to 1873 and again from 1879 until his untimely death in 1881. Mr. Keeler was a member of "the old party" of Sir John A. Macdonald and, during Keeler's final illness, the crucial vote on the proposed railway to lure British Columbia into the Confederation of Canada was taken. Prime Minister Macdonald was heard to remark, "Keeler of Northumberland is very ill," lamenting the loss of one vote in a contest that was likely to prove very close, and one on which so much depended.

Over 200 years after the Keelers arrived in Cramahe Township, in the spring of 1999, I was approached to begin one of the most exciting, challenging and rewarding projects of my career and my life. Living in Port Hope, I received a call from friends in my former home, the village of Colborne, with an unusual, unexpected and very flattering request. They wanted me to write the history of their community so that it could be preserved in print for future generations.

The result is this book, *How Firm a Foundation, A History of the Township of Cramahe and the Village of Colborne*. During the numerous amalgamations that took place two years ago, the village and the township have been reunited as one municipality. It was in advance of that, and to celebrate the turn of the millennium, that this book was published. I was honoured to be chosen to research and write it.

I had moved to the Village of Colborne in 1975, having previously lived in both Cobourg and Port Hope. I was fortunate to move to Northumberland from the Toronto area in 1971 - when the exodus of people my age was mainly going the other way. For instance, I lived in Port Hope before the 1980 flood changed its face forever, and I remember Colborne when it was mainly populated by the descendants of the first families who settled this area. I was privileged to meet a generation of people that has since passed, people born in the 19th century, the last living link with this area's pioneers.

In 1979, I became the editor of the Colborne Chronicle. At that time, the *Cobourg Star*, *Port Hope Guide* and *Colborne Chronicle* were locally owned and published by the late Dr. James Johnston, another person whose memory I cherish. "JJ" had a boundless interest in local history and present-day local characters and happenings, he liked to tell stories, and his enthusiasm was infectious. I was infected. And my fever was fed by my acquaintance with a host of interesting people, many of whom you, too, can meet in the pages of *How Firm a Foundation*.

During the 18 years that I was editor of its newspaper, the village of Colborne celebrated the 125th anniversary of its founding, and the Township of Cramahe, its 200th. In celebration of both those special occasions, I produced special historical editions of the Colborne Chronicle. Not to make excuses, but these had to be researched and pulled together relatively quickly, and I was simultaneously engaged in putting out the newspaper every week, so there are some errors and contradictions in the accounts you find here. However, they gave the editor - me - a good basis in the outline of local history, and some excellent contacts for further information, pictures, and so forth. I was able to catch and correct most of those errors, I hope, when I wrote the book.

I was hampered by the fact that there was only a very sketchy history previously published. Newspaper articles by local history buffs like Walter Luedtke and the late Percy Climo were tremendously helpful; however, there was no local archive of those articles or the many others that had been written over the years. There was a little paper-bound booklet, written by the late Delbert Peebles on the occasion of Colborne's 100th anniversary in 1959. And I must also pay tribute to the *Tweedsmuir Histories* of the various Women's Institutes of the area, but otherwise it was catch-as-catch-can. While Cobourg and Port Hope have microfilmed and microfiched records of old newspapers, Colborne and Cramahe had no such luxury, and I believe they still do not. However, helpful local people provided boxes (and boxes and boxes!) of unsorted clippings and writings. I am the first to admit that the research was anything but systematic, but then, it could not be.

When I moved to Colborne, one of the first people I met was a remarkable woman named Grace Rutherford (nee Peebles). My former husband and I moved into our house on Percy Street in August of 1975. The evenings were long and warm and flooded with late-summer light. He and I had a lot of work to do on our little, old-new house and we were out in front of the house on one of those summer evenings when an elderly lady chanced to pass by, walking carefully with her cane on the uneven, badly cracked sidewalks, which, by the way, had been laid in 1920. She stopped to chat. My husband, busy with his tasks, barely acknowledged her presence. Undaunted, she caught my eye and said, "Your husband must be a teacher, is he?" When I responded with some surprise in the affirmative, she nodded with satisfaction and said, "My husband always used to say, 'You can always tell a teacher but you can't tell them much.'"



While I laughed and my husband harrumphed, she quickly went on to explain that she, herself, had been a teacher. What an understatement that proved to be! I thank heaven that I got a chance to know Grace Rutherford – I always called her Amazing Grace. I was in my early 20s and she was in her mid-80s when we met, but she always made me feel a little slow. Her mind was amazing. Through her I gained my first rudimentary understanding of the relationships of families in the village and surrounding townships, and the first outline of the history that would later so deeply affect my own life.

Here's an example of the kind of teacher, the kind of person, Grace was, and the kind of world she lived in. I will read a short excerpt from Grace's story, this recollection from her former pupil and lifelong friend and admirer, the late Arnold Warren:

Things had not been going well at the (Wicklow) school. Some of the pupils - and I am thinking mostly of the boys - had been in the Senior IV (Grade 8) class for two or three years - big, strong farm boys. The year Grace took over, they had chased out three teachers before the end of September. The first morning Grace called the class to order, sat down at her desk and proceeded to read a lesson from the Bible. She had just nicely got started when a boy in one of the front seats turned around and slugged the boy behind him.

Grace closed the Bible, got up, walked around her desk, yanked the boy out of his seat, tripped him flat on his back, stood astride him, grabbed him by the shoulders and banged his head vigorously on the floor several times. She had no more trouble.

Incidentally, education took place. The pupils passed . (Y)ou say . she ruled by fear. Nonsense! She ruled by winning respect, as all great leaders must. And such respect cannot be demanded, it must be won. (HFF, pp. 53-54)

And Grace's husband, Mackenzie, or Mac, former clerk of the Township of Haldimand, and their daughter, Mary, also had an adventure worthy of note in our book:

In 1951, the notorious Boyd Gang robbed the [Colborne] bank while Mary Rutherford and her father, Mac, were waiting their turn for service. Three armed men, one of them the infamous Edwin Alonzo Boyd, entered the bank three minutes before closing time on the afternoon of Tuesday, March 27, ordering everyone to lie on the floor and demanding cash. According to an account from the *Belleville Intelligencer* of the following day: "Mackenzie Rutherford, 50, was slugged with the butt of a gun as he attempted to run out in the street and turn in the alarm. Mr. Rutherford was



lying in a pool of blood" when his daughter, in disregard of her orders to lie on the floor, jumped up and ran across the street to fetch a doctor for her injured father. She did, however, come back to the bank and resume her prone position on the floor. The newspaper account continues: "One of the gunmen slugged manager R.J.S. Virgin and knocked him to his knees just before the trio fled. The gunman hit him when he was unable to open the vault locked by a time-lock mechanism. As Mr. Rutherford was falling to the floor, he remembers one of the gunmen saying, 'Sorry, mister, I had to hit you.'"

A smiling Mac Rutherford is pictured in the paper next to the account, a bandage on his wounded head." (HFF, P. 55.)

Some of you may remember that bank-robber Ty Conn, in the 1990s, also robbed the bank in Colborne, largely because he was an admirer of the Boyd Gang and had adopted Edwin Alonzo Boyd as his personal hero and role model.

Related to Grace and Mackenzie was one of the area's most famous men. Canadian historians and students of military history across Canada know the name of Charles Smith Rutherford, V.C., M.C., M.M. But many in our own local area may not know that this remarkable man lived and died in our midst. I was lucky to arrive in the area in time to have known Charlie, too.

You wouldn't have thought of calling him anything but "Charlie," no matter how senior he was, how venerable, how important. He was the most unassuming man I ever met, one of the pleasantest people to chat with. You would never believe, on meeting him, that he was a war hero. Of course, he was quite elderly when I met him in 1979, when the Colborne Legion – which is named for him – threw a gala "Welcome Home" party for him. He was moving back to the area after having lived some years in Keswick, Ontario.

Although he must have been asked to repeat the story of the winning of his VC hundreds, perhaps thousands, of times, he never let it sound tired. Neither did he tell it boastfully, as if he felt he'd won the war single-handedly. Sixty years after the fact, he was still able to tell the story with freshness and a kind of wonder that things worked out as they did. I invite you to read part of Charlie's exceptional story:

A few weeks later, on August 26, [1918], the 2nd and 3rd Canadian Divisions opened an attack on either side of the Arras-Cambrai Road with Cambrai, 20 miles distant, as their objective. Between them and Cambrai lay the critical village of Monchy-le-Preux. At 3 a.m. on that dark and rainy morning, the

26-year-old Lt. Rutherford, 'C' Company, 5th Battalion, set out at the head of an assault party, headed for Monchy, over two miles away.

It was rough going. The terrain around the Allied soldiers had been ripped up by falling shells and, as they progressed, Rutherford and his men came upon an enemy battery of four field guns. After they took the 20 German gunners prisoner, most of 'C' Company, joined by 'A' Company, continued up the hill toward the heavily shelled ruins of the village of Monchy. A few men were detailed to escort the prisoners back to the rear of the advance.

Telling his own story some 60 years later, Charlie recalled, "I decided to run on up ahead to see how 'A' Company was doing. In those days, I could run like a deer."

When he returned to where he had left 'C' Company, it was no longer in place. Unbeknownst to Lt. Rutherford, shelling had become so heavy in his absence that the sergeant had ordered the assault party back to safer ground. Assuming that the party had continued on its advance, Rutherford pressed on toward Monchy, alone.

"I saw some men up ahead, so I went on up," he said. But then, "I realized they were all Germans. I knew if I hesitated, they'd start shooting at me, so I walked on up brazenly and said, 'You men are my prisoners.'"

He gamely waved his revolver, to indicate to the enemy soldiers that they were to come with him, and boldly repeated: "You men are my prisoners."

The German officer in charge of the gunnery installation spoke some English. He argued, "We prisoners? No! You prisoner." He signaled for the young Canadian Lieutenant to come to them. This Charlie did, but he declined to enter the German pillbox and reiterated: "You men are my prisoners. My men have you surrounded." To illustrate his statement, Rutherford waved his revolver in a circle.

The German officer hesitated in the face of this bold claim. He entered his pillbox and soon emerged, accompanied by another German officer. We can imagine Charlie Rutherford's relief (and

perhaps surprise) when the entire German party of 45 - two officers and three machine-gun crews - cast down their weapons and surrendered! Not a single shot had been fired. His bluff had worked. (HFF pp 29-30)

My late former boss, Dr. James Johnston, once showed me a photo of Charlie walking and chatting amiably with Queen Elizabeth II in a garden. JJ's humorous quip was that Charlie was probably telling her all about his own garden, and how his carrots were growing. He probably was - Charlie was happiest when talking about something other than himself - and Her Majesty appeared quite interested.

Back in those days the Reeve of Colborne was also a Rutherford, also related to Charlie. Theirs was a very old, and very important family in that area. At Charlie's Welcome-Home do, Reeve Walter Rutherford remarked that he had grown up hearing people speak in awed tones about "what Charlie did." He said, all through his boyhood, he had been afraid to ask just what Charlie had done!

Charlie, in his turn, was a living link to a much earlier generation. As a boy, he had gone to a local Sunday school run by a remarkable woman named Susan Burnham Greeley. Miss Greeley was born in 1806 - when these areas were very newly settled - and she died in 1901. She remembered the War of 1812, had been present as a child at the siege of Detroit. Her father, Aaron Greeley, was one of the area's early surveyors and a relation of Horace Greeley, the American newspaperman, whose famous advice was, "Go west, young man, go west."

Susan Greeley lived most of her long life in a farming community once known as Linlithgow, near the border between Haldimand and Cramahe Townships. Her story also appears in the Haldimand history book, *When the Lakes Roared*, and, in fact, that title is taken from a quotation of hers. Miss Greeley was a school-teacher, a voracious reader and - luckily for us - a person of prodigious memory. Here are some of her recollections of early settlement days, published shortly before her death:

That mighty forest, whose unvaried breadth stretches for miles, from east to west, 'from Erie's shore to Hudson's icy wave,' was very slightly infringed upon when we first came to dwell in it. The first range of townships, from Kingston to Toronto, were but partially cleared, some not at all, for instance Whitby, which was then untouched and was generally spoken of as The Nine Mile Woods. And what a grand and solemn sound proceeded from those glorious woods when the wind blew hard. It sounded so like the rush of great waters that it was thought to come from the Upper Lakes and was generally spoken of as, 'The lake is roaring, there will be a storm.' But the lakes are here, though the forest is not, and the grand music of the woods is heard no more.

"But the roads! Oh, the roads, you would need some experience before you could imagine what the roads were like. When the project of a gravel road from Colborne to Cobourg was first started a meeting was held in 1846 to discuss the matter, and one young gentleman opposed it, 'for the roads,' he said 'were perfectly good in the summer and winter and when they were not, people might stay at home.'

How did the people get to Church? You do not consider that there were no churches to go to. For some years after the first arrival those who wished to meet together for public worship could be comfortably accommodated in each other's houses, and when this was not convenient, each neighbourhood built a little log schoolhouse which served for the Sabbath meetings, also." (HFF pp. 22-23)

Numerous other stories of people are included in this book, as well as stories of the settlement, growth, and sometimes decline of the various communities in the Township. As in Cobourg and Port Hope, settlement began at the lake and moved northward. The busiest part of Cobourg is still clustered around its harbour, but Cramahe Harbour, later Colborne Harbour, later Cat Hollow, and now officially known as Lakeport, was once a bustling centre that declined after the coming of the railroad in 1856 and the expansion of overland travel. Prior to that time, however, it had been an important port, with three wharves, a shipyard, a customs house, and numerous hotels and other businesses.

But after the railroad came through, Colborne became Cramahe Township's principal settlement, situated ideally as it was, on the Kingston Road, just about exactly halfway between Toronto and Kingston. At one time, three railroads, Canadian Northern, Canadian Pacific and Grand Trunk (later Canadian National) – ran through Colborne and maintained stations there. In 1859, when the Village of Colborne, with a population of 1,100, was incorporated as a separate municipality from the Township of Cramahe, its first Council had every reason to believe they were embarking on a bright and prosperous future.

For one reason or another, Colborne has grown very little since that time. The population when I moved away in 1997 was about 2,000. Many of the thriving businesses, such as fruit and vegetable canneries, even a Canada Packers plant, had long since pulled up stakes. There is no railroad station there, anymore. Many of the amazing businesses of yesteryear – milliners, apple cooperages, even a cottage industry run by seven sisters who made broadloom carpeting in their Castleton home - have passed with changing times. The "fruit houses," apple barns near the former railroad sidings, have been converted to other uses – one is the Pentecostal Church.



But Colborne is not a ghost town, far from it. Castleton and Dundonald and Lakeport, all former centers of commerce in the Township, are still home to many descendants of the original settlers, although nowadays the old blood has been considerably mixed with that of "new people," like myself. Although I no longer live in Colborne, I will always regard it with great affection and fond memories, and I remain interested in its comings and goings.

In conclusion I would reiterate that I was fortunate to come to Northumberland in time to meet and know the generation that has now wholly passed, the generation that had a personal remembrance of what life was like here prior to World War I, the generation who sat at the knees of the pioneers, and cherished their stories so that they could be passed on by scribblers like me.

This has necessarily been a rather sketchy overview. I would advise you to read *How Firm a Foundation* to learn more about history of Colborne and Cramahe. It is available on loan at the Cobourg and Port Hope Public Libraries, and of course, at the Cramahe Township libraries in Colborne and Castleton, and for sale from the municipal offices of the Township of Cramahe, in Colborne.

## SIR HARRY OAKES 1874-1943: AN ACCUMULATION OF NOTES

By  
Bob Cowan

The subject of the presentation is relative to a book which I wrote on Sir Harry Oakes entitled *Sir Harry Oakes 1874-1943 An Accumulation of Notes* and which was published in the Fall of 2000.

The presentation will include a summary on how I became interested in Sir Harry Oakes; the story of the book, how it was developed, researched and finally published, not to mention some of the joys and frustrations along the way.

However, before proceeding any further with the presentation, there are three questions that I would like to ask you:

- How many of you have heard of Sir Harry Oakes?
- How many of you have been to, or lived in, Nassau or the Bahamas?
- How many of you have been involved in the writing, researching or publishing of a book?

The reason for these three questions is to show you that I had never heard of Sir Harry Oakes until I arrived in the Bahamas; secondly the fact that I knew very little about the Bahamas, except that Christopher Columbus had discovered it in 1492 and that it was considered a destination for tourists during the winter months. Aside from having had the book published, the only writing that I had ever done was for my high school year book and work-related writing.

### How did I first get interested in Sir Harry Oakes?

In the early 1980s I was working in the International Division of one of the Canadian chartered banks, when the decision was made to move the functions for which I was responsible at the time to the Bahamas. I was approached to see if I would be interested in a transfer to the Bahamas for a possible three-year stay. I discussed the matter with my wife Norah and also spoke with some of my colleagues at work in Montreal, who had been transferred to some of our other overseas operations. It was everyone's feeling that here was the opportunity of a lifetime to experience a different culture and style of living. Also a chance to get away from the cold winter months and basically live in a tropical paradise.

As a result, we left Montreal in January of 1982 where the temperature was a cool -25 F and within a few hours we were in Nassau where the temperature was a very pleasant +88 F. We could not ask for anything better. No more snow, no more heavy clothes, just the big beautiful blue Atlantic ocean to enjoy and plenty of sunshine. If and when it would rain, the Bahamas Tourist Board would call it liquid sunshine.

I settled in at work and one of the daily routines at lunchtime would be to take a walk down to the harbour and see the cruise ships and all the tourists walking around downtown Nassau. On the way back to the office I would stroll along West Bay Street, the main shopping area in Nassau and on occasion I would go into the Island Shop, which always had the latest in foreign newspapers and periodicals, as well as, many newly published books.

On one particular day, a book entitled *Who Killed Sir Harry Oakes?* by James Leasor was very prominently displayed. I picked up a copy and perused the jacket to see what the book was all about. The subject was a millionaire by the name of Sir Harry Oakes, who had been murdered right there in Nassau on July 8<sup>th</sup>, 1943 and the cast of characters proved to be most interesting: from Sir Harry himself, the second richest man in the British Empire at the time; the Duke of Windsor, who had been appointed as Royal Governor General of the Bahamas for the duration of the war years; Harold Christie, Nassau real estate entrepreneur; Dr. Axel Wenner-Gren, Swedish industrialist and millionaire; Count Alfred de Marigny, from the islands of Mauritius and who would one day be Sir Harry's son-in-law following his marriage to Nancy Oakes and who would also be charged with the murder of her father; and finally two members of the mob Charles *Lucky* Luciano and Myer Lansky.

I bought a copy of the book and as I read it, the thought occurred that it would be interesting to try and locate Sir Harry's *Westbourne* estate where he was found murdered. As a result I decided to go down to the local *touristy* police station located in the Cable Beach area, which was not far from the actual site of his estate. I spoke to one of the more senior officers on duty, explaining my interest, but received a rather negative response and was basically told to forget about Sir Harry Oakes. The following Monday morning I made some enquiries from our receptionist at the office and received a rather startled look from her, and though she claims to have attended the trial of Alfred de Marigny, nothing further was said about Sir Harry, except that his estate was now the site of the *Ambassador Beach Hotel*.

As a result of this apparent mystery surrounding the mention of the name of Sir Harry Oakes in Nassau, my curiosity only increased and I began to make notes on Sir Harry and many of his acquaintances and no doubt as it turned out, possibly some of his enemies.

#### Brief resume of Sir Harry Oakes

It is only fair to provide you with a brief background on the gentleman in question. Sir Harry Oakes was born plain Harry Oakes in 1874 in the small town of Sangerville, Maine in the eastern New England states. Following his preliminary education at nearby Foxcroft Academy, his father sent him to Bowdoin College in Brunswick, Maine in the hope that Harry would eventually show interest in becoming a doctor. However, Harry found out that doctors only earned about \$3,000 a year and for him that was not to his liking. He then informed his classmates that he was going to go in search of gold and become a millionaire. As a result in 1898, Harry would leave his family in Maine and start on his world travels in search of gold, going to such places as Australia, New Zealand, the Belgian Congo, the Philippines, Alaska, California to

mention only a few. After having travelled for some thirteen odd years, Harry then heard about gold discoveries in the small town of Porcupine in Northern Ontario, following which he headed to Toronto and visited the Bureau of Mines and Natural Resources. It was here that Harry did his research on the gold discoveries in Northern Ontario and read some of the annual reports that were on file, from which he felt that there was still some possibility of further discoveries.

In 1911, Harry headed north and got off the train in Swastika, Ontario and from there he found his way over to Kirkland Lake. Harry had done his homework and knew that certain claims would be expiring and returning to the Crown for lack of work. As a result Harry teamed up with Tom and George Tough, two local contractors, as he himself was short on cash and they agreed that they would pay for the staking of the claims for him. As a result, they named their mine the Tough-Oakes Mine. A year later, Harry was once again aware that other claims would be expiring and this time with cash in hand, he staked his own claims under Kirkland Lake and along the shores of the lake, thus establishing his now famous, Lake Shore Mines.

Harry had now struck gold and as the next few years went by, he began to make money to the point that he was on his way to being a millionaire. He then took a break from his day to day work and started off on a world cruise. While on the cruise he would meet a young lady, half his age at twenty four, by the name of Eunice McIntyre who was from Australia. Almost within a year they would marry and eventually they would have five children Nancy, Shirley, William Pitt, Sydney and Harry Phillip.

In view of Harry's new found wealth, the Oakes family began to travel the world and purchase various estates including one in Niagara Falls, Ontario; one in Bar Harbour, Maine; the Caves and Westbourne estates in Nassau; as well as, the British Colonial Hotel also in Nassau; and other places in London, England and West Palm Beach, Florida.

#### Harry moves to the Bahamas

In the early thirties, Harry was being taxed at least eighty percent by the Canadian government on his earnings from his Lake Shore Mines, however, one day while in West Palm Beach, Harry would meet Harold Christie, the Nassau real estate entrepreneur, who would convince him that there was no income tax in the Bahamas and that the death duty was only two percent.

As a result, Harry moved his family and fortune to the Bahamas without hesitation. It would be in Nassau that he would finally meet the Duke and Duchess of Windsor and his future son-in-law Alfred de Marigny, who would marry his daughter Nancy in New York, only two days after her eighteenth birthday unbeknownst to her parents.

Harry Oakes was now the number one citizen of the Bahamas and was most generous to the local people, providing a great deal of much needed employment to the local labour force, as well as making a number of philanthropic donations to various charitable organizations.



Over the years, Harry also made substantial donations to the St. George's Hospital building fund in London, England, not to mention the purchase of three spitfire aircrafts for the war effort. As a result Harry Oakes would be on the King's Honour List in 1939 and would be knighted as Sir Harry Oakes. Plain Harry Oakes was now Sir Harry Oakes and Eunice McIntyre would now be known as Lady Eunice Oakes. For the next four years Harry would lead the "life of Reilly," as we say, and was now part of the social circles of the rich and famous in Nassau.

On the evening of July 7<sup>th</sup>, 1943 Sir Harry, who was alone as his family was in Bar Harbour, Maine for the summer, hosted a dinner party for three of his friends at his Westbourne estate in anticipation of his departure a few days later to rejoin Lady Oakes and the children. One of his dinner guests was Harold Christie. On the very same evening, his son-in-law, Alfred de Marigny, who was also alone as his wife Nancy was up in Bennington, Vermont for health reasons, hosted a dinner party at which eleven people would join him. Both parties seem to have been without incidents. However, on the following morning of July 8<sup>th</sup> Sir Harry's best friend Harold Christie would discover the lifeless and charred body of Sir Harry Oakes.

The Duke of Windsor was advised of the tragic death of Sir Harry around 7.30 a.m. and after a three and one half hour deliberation, the Duke finally made what was considered one of the greatest mistakes of his life and requested the assistance of the Miami Police Department in investigating the murder. It was the Duke's feeling that the local constabulary in Nassau was not in a position, nor did they have the necessary equipment, to investigate the murder of such a prominent citizen, who was known worldwide.

Consequently, Captains Edward Melchen and James Otto Barker arrived on the scene from Miami and within twenty four hours Sir Harry's son-in-law Alfred de Marigny would be charged with the murder. After a four month trial, de Marigny was acquitted based on improper presentation of the so-called evidence by the Prosecution in the form of the famous Exhibit J, the fingerprint of the accused's little left finger which was supposedly found on the Chinese screen next to Sir Harry's bed.

#### How did I do my research for the book?

The research for the material was one of the more interesting aspects of writing the manuscript and provided an opportunity that I will never forget in meeting some interesting individuals. Three of the more important interviews were with Alfred de Marigny, Sir Harry's son-in-law, in Houston, Texas in 1993, and who had been charged with the murder and subsequently acquitted; secondly one with Ernest Callender in Nassau, the previous year, who was one of the lawyers who defended de Marigny on the charges; and last, Rev. Robert Hall from the small village of Gambier at the west end of the Island of New Providence and who was a neighbour of Sir Harry and became good friends with him.

The next interesting aspect of the story was the criminal investigation of the murder scene which I undertook and which brought me into contact in the first place with the Ontario Fire

Marshall's Office in Kingston in an attempt to analyse some of the photos of the crime scene in the hope of establishing the type of weapon used in the murderer's attempt to set fire to Sir Harry's body and the room. The famous Chinese screen beside Sir Harry's bed, which was a gift from the Duchess of Windsor to the Oakes for their kindness in allowing them to reside at the Westbourne estate following their arrival in Nassau and which would be one of the main pieces of evidence shown at the trial which bore many burn marks.

Another aspect of the crime scene in the room was the possibility of blood stains on the walls, flooring, furniture and carpeting. In this regard, I was in contact with a Blood Stain Analyst with the OPP and discussed the various possible pools of blood on the floor as seen in the photos.

Last but not least, were the visits to the Coroner's Office in downtown Toronto where it was possible to get some forensic evaluations of the charred body of Sir Harry Oakes and the possible weapon used for the murder.

The only physical piece of evidence ever presented by the Prosecution during the trial to place Alfred de Marigny at the scene of the crime and as the perpetrator of the crime, was a fingerprint of de Marigny's little finger on his left hand, which was, as mentioned, taken from the Chinese screen located next to Sir Harry's bed.

In order to experience the art of fingerprinting I had my own fingerprints taken while I was working in Chicago. There I approached the Immigration Department, who directed me to a special service group, who took my fingerprints on a Personal Identification Card. The next step was to obtain further information on fingerprinting and in this regard I approached the Cobourg Police Department, where I had the pleasure of meeting a young lady who was a Forensic Identification Technician specializing in fingerprinting and who would assist me in uncovering the secrets of the art of fingerprinting and also prepared for me a comparison chart, which is used during trials to compare the accused's fingerprint with those raised from the scene of the crime or the murder weapon.

It was interesting to note from the transcript of the trial that the only murder weapon described was referred to as a **blunt instrument**, which caused four identical triangularly shaped markings slightly above Sir Harry's left ear. A number of potential murder weapons have been suggested over the years including a gun or revolver, a balustrade, a fishing spear, a prospector's pick, a boat winch, a machete, a jack handle, the steel shaft of a golf club, an ice pick and quite possibly a plain hammer, all of which could have caused the possible markings to the skull.

During the course of my research I was in contact with an officer of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) who assisted me in communicating with the FBI in Washington, or more precisely with FOIPA – the Freedom of Information and Privacy Act department of the United States government. I wrote to them and received a great deal of background information on some of the main characters and also concerning the life and murder of Sir Harry Oakes.

### How did I develop the book?

As mentioned at the start of the presentation, my research came about as a result of my reading the book *Who Killed Sir Harry Oakes?* and slowly researching various sources of information which I then added to my notes on Sir Harry.

The original manuscript I drafted was entitled *Sir Harry Oakes - From A to Z*, which comprised some 220 pages of everything possible relating to Sir Harry and the cast of characters, listed under the letters of the alphabet such as "A for Abdication of the Duke of Windsor," "O for Oakes," and so on.

However, I did not feel comfortable with the set-up of my manuscript and decided to visit with Peter Fancy in Barrie, a well-known author on matters pertaining to the north. In particular, Fancy has written a great deal about the mining towns and characters who lived around the likes of Kirkland Lake and Cobalt and who eventually made it to the gold rush scene in Northern Ontario.

His first reaction after perusing my manuscript was that – "yes, you have the research material, but please do something with it – turn it into a story." I subsequently divided Sir Harry's story into fifteen chapters covering his life and times from his early days in Maine, to his travels in search of gold around the world, leading to his discovery of gold in Kirkland Lake and finally to his tragic and untimely death in the Bahamas.

I was aware that the Highway Book Shop in Cobalt, Ontario did some publishing of manuscripts about the mining towns and individuals who lived around the north. I finally approached them with the manuscript which was accepted for publication. After a great deal of editing, the manuscript and photographs were put into book form and the results are what you see this evening.

### And finally the last chapter

Needless to say, there were certain out-of-pocket expenses to be covered relative to my purchase of old photos, books, travel, accommodation, couriers, proof printing, telephone calls and other miscellaneous costs. As a result, the thought occurred to me that possibly I would be eligible for a grant to cover some of my expenses and decided to write to the Office of the Minister of Canadian Heritage as a first time writer. However, I was in for a surprise when I finally received a reply which I quote in part as follows: "With respect to your request for funding for first-time writers, neither the Department of Canadian Heritage nor the Canada Council for the Arts provides assistance for non-professional writers or for the publication of individual titles." The letter was signed by a Senior Policy Advisor.

And that basically was my story of Sir Harry Oakes and how the book was put together, however, there will always remain one question to be answered - Who did kill Sir Harry Oakes?



## HISTORY OF THE COBOURG BAND<sup>1</sup>

by  
Robert "Bob" Irvine

It is my pleasure to inform the members of The Cobourg and District Historical Society on the illustrious history of the Cobourg town bands which preceded the present band that you listen to during our summer concerts in the Victoria Park Bandshell.

In May 2000 I was asked if I would take on the responsibility of being the band's historian – a title that amounted to looking after band files and pictures. It was not long before the title took on new responsibilities for me. Preparations were being made for the retirement of our long-time Director of Music, Roland G. White. A dedication ceremony was planned at Victoria Hall in November, and I was asked to prepare a visual display of band history and memorabilia for public view in the four cabinets located in Victoria Hall.

Since I was the only active bandsman still in the band from the Cobourg Kiltie Band era of the 1940s, and being a native Cobourgite which gave me a distinct advantage of knowing who to ask for resource material; i.e., old photos of family relatives, it was appropriate that I took on the job. Being inexperienced in the research business, for me, the most obvious place to begin was the Cobourg Public Library. To my surprise, the three books written about Cobourg, as well as the archival pictures and documents, gave very little information about the band. This problem was compounded by the fact that I was not sure what I was looking for! All recent information seemed to point to the band starting in 1921. Having read the book, *Cobourg 1798-1948* by Edwin C. Guillet, I realized that this was not true as he had made several references to earlier bands. Thus began my dedication to present to the people of Cobourg a story of their history – the History of the Cobourg Band.

My research effort at the Historical Society office was an unproductive exercise as I was not allowed to just search their original newspapers unless I referred to an actual date.<sup>2</sup> This I can understand, and they kindly referred me to the microfilm located in the Cobourg Public Library. The written band history was there just waiting to be read!

Now I asked myself: What year do I begin? What do I look for? What were the previous bands called?

I started by reading Cobourg newspapers on microfilm for the years 1834, 1839, and 1848, and found mostly "announcements" (apparently the word "advertisement" was considered too crude in those days). Even though Cobourg was the site of the 1848 Provincial

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<sup>1</sup>. Bob had several tables covered with photographs and clippings pertaining to the history of the bands.

<sup>2</sup>. Editor's note: There seems to be a discrepancy here as The CDHS Archives has only a very few original newspapers.



Exhibition (a precursor of the Canadian National Exhibition) there was no mention of any town band!

Some of the earlier years' history may be lost because of the poor quality of the microfilm made it impossible to read!

My luck changed when I began reading the 1855 copies of the *Cobourg Star and Newcastle Gazette*. The Crimean War was headline news. An article that immediately caught my attention was Cobourg's celebration of the Allied Victory at Sebastopol. This was described on Page 2, Column 4 of the October 10, 1855 paper and read as follows:

On Thursday evening last, the inhabitants of our town celebrated the fall of Sebastopol by a general illumination torch light procession and fireworks. The evening being dark the display had an excellent effect. Our new band headed the procession and created a very favourable impression.

I therefore took it upon myself to assume that 1855 would be the start of bands in Cobourg as we know them today, and that this will be the beginning of my story of when the Cobourg Band began its illustrious career.

At this time, however, the top priority of my research was to organize the displays in Victoria Hall for Rolly White's retirement party. Through my contacts with former Kiltie band members or their surviving family members (people were very generous and eager to supply me with many photographs and other treasures) and the many photocopies I had printed from the microfilm at the library, I was able to mount a comprehensive display in time for Rolly's ceremony of dedication in November 2000. This display remained on exhibit at Victoria Hall until the middle of February 2001.

By now I had caught the research bug. A job begun out of curiosity was now an obsession, and with full support from the band executive, I attacked my research in earnest. Arriving first at the library doors, I would spend 2-3 days, or 10-15 hours, a week reading old Cobourg newspapers on microfilm – a magnifying glass was my constant companion!

It was not long before I discovered that Cobourg's band had indeed experienced a most illustrious career, and to my surprise, by 2003 discovered that the first Coburg band was started in 1842 and not 1855. This revelation occurred through a chance meeting with Nora Cunningham at the Cobourg Public Library. She informed me that she had noticed, through the genealogical research she was doing at that time, on Page 40 of "*Adopted As Read*" – *The Story of Cobourg Common and Public Schools to 1907* by G.W.C. Nelson, a reference to the first Cobourg band. That paragraph was as follows: "At about the same time Professor Thomas Kelk, an Englishman, left Cobourg. He had established the first band in Cobourg in 1842."

I immediately began researching the Cobourg Star beginning on January 5, 1842 and hit pay-dirt on November 30, 1942 when the following notice appeared:

Wanted – Qualified person to teach Instrumental Amateur Band forming in Cobourg – Apply to James Calcutt, Esq. Cobourg or Bandmaster of her Majesty's 93 Regt. Toronto.

If the person be qualified to tune Piano Fortes and also teach Vocal Music, it would be to his advantage.

This advertisement ran every week until January 18, 1843 (seven weeks). The first public appearance was at the first of the Cobourg Assemblies held at the Albion Hotel on January 10, 1843 where the newly formed Amateur Band lent their assistance, and their performance called forth commendations from all sides. The band even had acquired uniforms by April 1843.

The Cobourg Amateur Band, as it was called, played at most Cobourg celebrations over the next few months, but it was not until July 17, 1844 when the first recorded reference was made to Professor Kelk as the leader. It was the launching of William Weller's steamboat, *FORRESTER*, on Rice Lake. In order to add to the amusement of the large number of persons travelling by carriage from Cobourg for the occasion, Mr. Weller procured the attendance of the Amateur Band under the leadership of its teacher, Mr. Kelk.

I have only researched 1842 through 1848 of these early years and still have 1849 to 1854 to complete. At this time I cannot verify whether or not there was a band in existence between 1849 and when the new band (The Cobourg Brass Band) was formed in 1855. I do know that it was the Bowmanville Band and not the Cobourg Band that played at the Provincial Exhibition held in Cobourg in 1848 which is probably why I found no reference to the Cobourg Band in my initial research.

In 1855, the newly formed Cobourg Brass Band, under the direction of Mr. McCarthey and soon thereafter by Professor H.F. Chalaupka, became so advanced in skill that it was judged the "Best Brass Band in Upper Canada" at band competitions held as part of the Provincial Exhibition of 1860, 1861, and 1862. To win this coveted award for three consecutive years was a feat that no other band of its day had accomplished.

Earlier bands in Cobourg did not have the luxury of financial support from the town. Money had to be raised for their operating costs which included paying the bandmaster, purchasing music, uniforms and instruments. This was not always an easy task but bandsmen are very resourceful individuals and found ways to generate funds! The following lists suggests some of their endeavours:

- Indoor and outdoor concerts
- Silver collections were taken at concerts
- Subscriptions were sold to Cobourg citizens
- Participated in parades
- Held minstrel and vaudeville shows
- Played for public skating in Cobourg's covered rink
- Supplied music for fancy dress skating carnivals
- organized and played concerts on boat cruises to Rochester, Niagara Falls, and the Thousand Islands

It was not until 1900 that the Town Council of the day realized that if it wanted a full-time band, it must provide some financial assistance for their needs. A yearly grant of \$150.00 was allotted to defray the bandmaster's salary. This grant was increased to \$400.00 and eventually, \$1500.00. This grant was a tremendous help in keeping the band alive, but it was still necessary to raise additional money – there were many years when the band came very close to being non-existent!

By 1955, it became apparent to the band of the day, the Cobourg Kilties Band, that if it was to survive, something more permanent had to be done so that the band could exist without fear of having to disband because of lack of funds. A petition was presented to the ratepayers of Cobourg for their approval to have council to levy a 1/3 mil rate on their tax bill, such funds would be issued annually to the band for its support and upkeep.

Approval was received and on January 11, 1956, By-laws 2115 and 2116 were enacted giving the band the funds needed to operate efficiently. A silver collection has not been taken by the band in Victoria Park since that day.

A change on the mil rate system since the late 1970s has meant that the band does not receive a 1/3 mil but must submit its yearly budget for approval by Town Council as every other Town organization must do.

The band, since its inception in 1842, has had many different names:

- The Cobourg Amateur Band
- The Cobourg Brass Band
- The Cobourg Citizen's Band
- The 6<sup>th</sup> Northumberland Militia Band
- The 40<sup>th</sup> Battalion Artillery Band
- The Cobourg Cavalry Band
- The Fountain Hose Band
- The Sons of England Band
- The Cobourg Concert Band - The Cobourg Concert Band (Kilties)

continued...

- The Cobourg Kiltie Band
- The Concert Band of Cobourg
- (currently) The Concert Band of Cobourg, Band of Her Majesty's Royal Marine Association.

There have been a corresponding number of tutors, bandmasters and directors of music. To date I have recorded the following persons:

- Professor Kelk
- Mr. McCarthy
- Professor H.F. Chalaupka
- Professor Boate
- Arthur Longmore
- J. Wellwood
- Allie Brown
- Mr. Ansell
- Joseph M. Dawson
- John Ruse
- S.H. Scroggs
- E. John Meeham (Mephan or Mephham)
- Professor Chenhall
- J.H. Goldring
- George E. Hurt
- Fred Hempstead
- Eric Niles
- William Ramsay
- Howard Kelly
- Roland G. White
- (present director) Paul Storms

It is interesting to note that in 1920 Cobourg had two bands – The Cobourg Citizens' Band under the direction of George Hurt and supported by the Town Council, and the Cobourg Concert Band. The latter bandsmen under the direction of Joe Goldring did not support Mr. Hurt! Both bands competed against each other playing concerts in Victoria Park on different evenings during the summer of 1920. After a change of uniform to Highland dress, this band was known as The Cobourg Band (Kilties), and finally, as the Cobourg Kiltie Band affectionately referred to by older Cobourgites as the "Kilties!" Fortunately, by 1921, differences had been resolved and both bands combined into the Cobourg Kiltie Band under the direction of Joe Goldring.

In the early years, winter concerts were played in the Albert Rooms, a large hall for entertainment purposes located in a hotel on King Street. A new home for the band concerts was found when the opera house at Victoria Hall was completed in 1860.



Summer concerts were played at the "Four Corners" (that is, Division and King Streets), or in the foyer of Victoria Hall.

The band also played for walkabouts, garden parties, strawberry festivals, picnics, the annual firemen's ball and the annual Fire Brigade Inspection.

In 1902, a proper bandstand was erected in Victoria Park; the cost for this structure being \$854.62. It is my understanding from a long-time Cobourg resident that this bandstand was located at the corner of Victoria Park where the walkway enters at Queen and McGill Streets. This structure was used for summer concerts for the next 31 years. At that time – 1933 – it was deemed unsafe and at the suggestion of Mr. Goldring, a new bandstand was built. The band played its first concert there on Thursday, June 15<sup>th</sup>. The need for a more permanent structure was recognized and in 1934 the band shell that you now see in Victoria Park was built. When the band shell was completed, the top half of the old bandstand was moved to the southeast corner of the park (this would be approximately where left field is at the Paul Currelly Ball Diamond). It remained there for many years as a place where sunbathers could get out of the sun. It was eventually torn down because it would have been too costly to repair. It is interesting to note that the band shell was designed so that the shell part vibrated like the sounding board on a piano. It has been reported that on clear nights the band music could be heard as far away as the hill on Highway 45 (Creighton Hill). The band now had a permanent home for its summer concerts!

It is interesting to note that considerable controversy preceded the building of the band shell in Victoria Park. Early in April 1934, an intense controversy developed which temporarily halted construction. The controversy had two features: opposition to the project; and the actual location in the park for the new "shell." Some so-called prominent citizens were violently opposed to the idea and kicked up quite a fuss over the building of a new bandstand. However, once the structure was completed, the complaints from these citizens were heard no more!

For those in favour of the new idea, the matter of location became a controversial subject. Some wanted the structure placed in the southwest corner of the park to face easterly (and incidentally, to direct the sound waves to the residences of the "moneyed citizens"). Others wanted the new shell to occupy the southeast corner of the park in order to direct the music towards the business section. It was this controversy and indecision as to location that delayed work for several weeks.

Finally a compromise decision was made. The building was located to face due north. The sound waves from the shell would cover the large lawn area where audiences would conveniently assemble and those seated in motor cars parked at the north end of the park. With this settled, the Committee ordered construction to proceed.

The official sod-turning ceremony, performed by Jack Delanty, was attended by the Town Council, the Parks Board and citizens.

The cost of the band shell was \$1,863.00, well below the estimated figure of \$3000.00.

The band's attachment to significant events in Cobourg has been very impressive as illustrated in the following:

**Played at Memorial Services for Royalty:**

- |  |      |
|--|------|
| • Prince Albert (Queen Victoria's Consort) | 1861 |
| • Queen Victoria                           | 1901 |
| • King Edward VII                          | 1910 |
| • King George V                            | 1936 |
| • King George VI                           | 1952 |
| • Queen Elizabeth, The Queen Mother        | 2002 |

**Played for Royal visits to Cobourg:**

- |  |      |
|--|------|
| • The Prince of Wales opening of Victoria Hall | 1860 |
| • King George VI and Queen Elizabeth           | 1939 |
| • Queen Elizabeth and Prince Philip            | 1973 |
| • Duke and Duchess of York                     | 1987 |

**Played for Governor Generals Political Figures:**

- It has been the Duty Band for every Governor General of Canada who has visited Cobourg since His Excellency Lord Monck in 1862.
- Played for Prime Ministers and Premiers visiting Cobourg.

**The band has played an integral part in many notable events over the years:**

- Laying the cornerstone for Victoria Hall in 1856 and at its opening in 1860
- Entertaining at the Victoria College Convocation Service 1866;
- Laying the cornerstone for Central School (Thomas Gillbard P.S.) 1906;
- Honouring the Golden Jubilee of King George V and Queen Mary in 1935;
- Performing the band's first Beat retreat Ceremony during the Victoria Cross - George Cross Reunion in 1976. This was performed outside St. Peter's Church and for the first times the band in scarlet tunics wore their white pith helmets and marched as the Concert Band of Cobourg, The Band of Her Majesty's Royal Marine Association (Ontario).

For those not familiar with the terms "Retreat Ceremony," I offer the following explanation. The "Retreat" was the standard practice of the British Army. It became a ritual in 1727 in the days of the fortress. "Retreat" is one-half hour before sundown. In the beginning it was sounded to notify those outside the gates that the fortress was to be closed.

The *Treatise on Military Discipline, 1727*, states:

Half an hour before the Gates are to be shut, generally at the Setting of the Sun...The Drummers of the Port-Guards are to go upon the Ramparts and beat a Retreat to give notice to those without that the gates are to be shut...As soon as the Drummers have finished the Retreat, which they should do in less than a quarter of an hour, the Officers must order the Barriers and Gates to be shut.

The “Beat Retreat Ceremony” performed by bands today, including our own band, has lost its original military significance and is more of a precision display of marching combined with military marches with the band going through complicated manoeuvres of slow and fast marching.<sup>3</sup>

All of these special events in the band’s past history were culminated in its highly successful trip to Coburg, Germany in 1997.

In September of 2002, the band was invited to Plattsburgh, New York. One of the last battles of the War of 1812 was fought at Plattsburgh and the British Royal Marines took part in that battle. The Cobourg band led a contingent of former British Marines (members of the Royal Marine Association, Ontario). The band participated in the parade, performed a Military Tattoo, and delighted the citizens of Plattsburgh with an outdoor concert in the evening. When the band played a most appropriate number, “United We Stand,” our American neighbours were so moved that by the end of the number, everyone was standing – with arms crossed – holding hands and swaying to the music. As our commentator said at the time, this participation and reaction had never happened before. (For many of us there were lumps in our throats which were hard to swallow.) The band has been invited for a repeat performance in September 2003.

Present inhabitants of this town are probably not aware of the celebrity status Cobourg held in the early days when Victoria College was a going concern at the top of College Street before it was moved to Toronto, and that many wealthy American industrialists had established their summer homes here. It was the time of the Cobourg Horse Show held in Donegan Park. This show was considered to be one of the finest of its kind in North America. As bands were a popular means of entertainment next to vaudeville, it was normal for Cobourg to be included by touring bands as one of their stops. Three famous bands which came here are

- Her majesty’s Grenadier Guards 1898
- His Majesty’s Coldstream Guards 1902
- His Majesty’s Black Watch Band and Pipes 1904

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<sup>3</sup>. The Cobourg Band was to go to Fort Henry in Kingston July of 2003 to perform their “Beat Retreat Ceremony.” Financial constraints at Fort Henry have necessitated a postponement of this performance.

In later years, Cobourg played host to:

- The 48<sup>th</sup> Highlanders of Canada
- The Royal Dragoon Musical Ride
- The Queen's Own Band
- The Central Command Airforce Band
- The Canadian Ordinance Band
- The Canadian Forces Vimy Band (Signal Corps)
- The Women's Army Corps Pipe Band and Brass Band
- The Salvation Army Citadel Band of Toronto
- The Stadtkapelle Coburg (The City Band of Coburg, Germany)

The present band is a very healthy and active band. Under the tutelage of Rolly White over a thirty-year period (1970-2000), the band developed from the remaining five members in 1969 into one of the finest concert and marching bands in Ontario, able to compete at any musical level whenever requested to do so. It has received many awards and its services are in continuous demand. The Canadian Band Association chose Cobourg as the location for their Annual Convention in February 2003 with the Concert Band of Cobourg as the host band. This proved to be an unqualified success and will undoubtedly be repeated at some other location next year.

I would like to close my talk by highlighting some of the many interesting events I came across during my research which have absolutely nothing to do with the topic, but have a great deal to do with putting the band's activities in perspective with events happening during a particular era. Here are some of those events of interest from 1842-1924:

- 1842 – Indian celebration in Québec of the birth of the Prince of Wales (future Edward VII) and the rejoicing at Windsor to celebrate the christening;
- 1843 – Monument completed over the remains of Burn's Highland Mary in the West Church, Greenock;
- 1844 – Riot of students at Victoria College, Cobourg;
- 1844 – The last of the Stuarts is buried. James Stuart was born on December 25, 1728 in South Carolina, United States. His father, General John Stuart, was a near relative of the Pretender Prince Charles;
- 1845 – A Public Meeting held at the Court House for the purpose of eliciting and expression upon the subject of the proposed Kingston and Toronto Railway;
- 1846 – Sir Robert Peel's resignation received by Her Majesty;
- 1847 – *The Cobourg Star* becomes *The Cobourg Star and Newcastle Gazette*;
- 1848 – The Provincial Exhibition held in Cobourg;
- 1856 – The political hostilities that took place locally over the pros and cons of building Victoria Hall, both before and after the laying of the cornerstone;
- 1857 – Resolutions evolving out of a public meeting in February over moving Victoria College to another part of the country;



- **1857** – The calamity caused by the resignation of five Cobourg town councillors in November;
- **1858** – Completion of laying the Atlantic cable;
- **1859** – The execution of Dr. King; the first and only public hanging to take place within the borders of the United Counties of Northumberland and Durham. Witnessed by 10,000 spectators, with 400 to 500 of them being women. It required 20 constables to manage the crowd.
- **1860** – Schedule of the Prince of Wales' visit to Upper and Lower Canada; details of his visit to Cobourg for the opening of Victoria Hall;
- **1861** – Little Tom Thumb plays the Albert Room, arriving and leaving in his miniature horse and carriage;
- **1863** – the Royal marriage of the Prince of Wales;
- **1865** – Death of William Weller;
- **1865** – Assassination of President Lincoln;
- **1867** – The Confederation Bill passed and Queen Victoria's proclamation on the formation of the Dominion of Canada;
- **1868** – Trial of Jefferson Davis after close of American Civil War;
- **1870** – Death of Charles Dickens;
- **1876** – The Sioux Wars;
- **1880** – Purchase of the land to establish Victoria Park in Cobourg;
- **1880** – Death of George Brown; raising of funds in Cobourg to help pay for his monument located at Queen's Park, Toronto;
- **1880** – The great scout and guide, Buffalo Bill, and a Troupe of Cheyenne Indians to play Victoria Hall on October 28<sup>th</sup>. The Indians performed their war dance on stage and Buffalo Bill and his Serenade Band led a street parade prior to the shows;
- **1881** – Uncle Tom's Cabin played at Victoria Hall;
- **1893** – Chicago World's Fair took place. (I have assembled a chart showing the various buildings housing the displays at the fair. There is a wonderful scene in connection with the Toronto Military Tournament – The Maple leaf and Auld Lang Syne.);
- **1893** – Body snatchers stole a body from Union Cemetery and left the clothes!
- **1897** – Queen Victoria's Jubilee;
- **1902** – Crowning of King Edward VII;
- **1910** – King Edward VII's funeral;
- **1914** – Beginning of weekly war news of WWI until its end in 1918;
- **1916** – Sinking of the Titanic;
- **1924** – Unveiling of Cobourg's Cross of Sacrifice in Victoria Park on November 11<sup>th</sup>.

I have presented just a very brief look at the colourful past of the Cobourg band. When my research is complete, it is my intention to compile all the information into some readable material. To date I have researched 134 years of newspapers – only 26 to go! It is a labour of love, and I hope I have piqued your interest. If anyone has pictures or related information, I would be very pleased to hear from you.

I will close with an item from the Cobourg paper dated March 15, 1912:

Mr. Sousa, the famous band conductor, hates public oratory, and never, if he can help it, makes a speech in public. After one of his performances in the States recently, his audience kept clamouring for a speech and refused to be satisfied with the usual bow. Finally Sousa stepped to the front of the platform and raising his hand said impressively, "Ladies and Gentlemen, can you all hear me?" There was the usual "Yes." "Then I wish you good-night," replied the conductor, and promptly walked off stage.



**Above:** Bob Irvine and the results of his research. Photograph by Dorothy De Lisle.

**Left:** Paul Storms, Band Leader and Bob Irvine. Photograph by Dorothy De Lisle.

**Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe  
Introduction<sup>1</sup>**

by  
Peter Greathead

**O**ur guest this evening has travelled not only a great distance from York, but also travelled through time.

John Graves Simcoe was born in Cotterstock, Northamptonshire on February 25, 1752. After graduating from Exeter Grammar School and Eton College, he attended Oxford University, but after one year decided on a military career. Simcoe obtained a commission in the 35<sup>th</sup> Regiment of Foot and was sent to fight in the American Revolution. His regiment arrived in Boston in 1775 only two days after the Battle of Bunker Hill. Simcoe received three wounds, the first and most serious at the Battle of Brandywine Creek in Pennsylvania. As captain in the 40<sup>th</sup> Foot, he fought in the Long Island campaign, the capture of New York, and the New Jersey campaign.

In 1777, Simcoe was promoted to major and commander of the Queen's Rangers. Despite many casualties, the Queen's Rangers helped defeat Washington at Brandywine Creek. It is reported (on the Internet) that during this battle one order from Simcoe changed the course of history, when he told his soldiers not to shoot three Americans fleeing the field. One of those Americans was George Washington.

After being captured in an ambush, Simcoe was held prisoner for six months. He was exchanged and invalided back to England, just before the surrender at Yorktown. Admiral Samuel Graves, Simcoe's godfather, invited him to his home, Hembury Fort House to convalesce. It was there he met the Admiral's niece, Elizabeth Gwilliam. Before long it was obvious that John and Elizabeth had fallen in love, much to the delight of the Admiral. They married on December 30, 1782 and purchased 5000 acres on the Wolf River where they built their home, Wolford Lodge.

Simcoe was elected to the House of Commons in the Cornish borough of St. Mawes in 1790. However, in the same year, he was promised the lieutenant governorship of what was to become the new loyalist province of Upper Canada. After 18 months of preparation, Simcoe took up his post in Upper Canada on June 24, 1792. And he seems to still be here!

Citizens of Cobourg and area, please welcome Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe.

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<sup>1</sup>. The occasion was the May Social of the Society held at Woodlawn Terrace Inn on May 27, 2003.



**LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR JOHN GRAVES SIMCOE<sup>2</sup>**

by

**Lieutenant Colonel Michael Stevenson, CD**

In 1759, John Graves Simcoe's father was the naval captain in charge of the flotilla which came up the St. Lawrence with General Wolfe. While in Canada, he unfortunately caught pneumonia and was buried at sea. His son was five years old. However, he left a lasting legacy for his son: Simcoe, Senior, wrote the *Principles and Guidelines for the Conduct of a Naval Officer in the British Navy*, a guide still referred to by the American Navy with regard to discussion on leadership. Simcoe's younger brother was drowned in the River Ex a few years later, leaving John Graves Simcoe alone with his mother. Fortunately, his godfather, Admiral Graves, arranged to have John attend Eton, and later Oxford, for a classical education which included learning Latin and Greek. In those days, reading was considered a privilege.

The United Kingdom, with a population of 10,000,000, was run by 1200 families who were the aristocrats. (Simcoe was not one of them; he was never a lord.) However, Simcoe's grandfather was an Anglican rector living at Leaside House in Durham, and this, along with a formal education and his marriage to Elizabeth who was an heiress, Simcoe was a man on the rise. When Lieutenant Colonel Simcoe set sail for Upper Canada, King George III came to the dock to wave goodbye.

Thus it was, in 1792, that Simcoe set sail for a sea voyage of forty-two days to this new British territory. In 1759, the Treaty of Paris had given Quebec to an uninterested England, and by 1782, England – having lost her colonies in America following the Revolution – had gained approximately 50,000 citizens who, loyal to the British Crown, then infiltrated Nova Scotia and Upper Canada. Lieutenant Colonel Simcoe's mission was to establish a British colony in Upper Canada. His idea was to replicate Britain, the only model he knew. Everything Simcoe was to do had to have Royal Assent, a time-consuming and labourious process given the vast distances. For example, the acceptance of the Jay Treaty of 1794, defining the borders between Canada and the United States, was not made known to Simcoe until 1796 – some two years later!

On arrival in Upper Canada, Simcoe found six houses in Newark (Niagara), a few cabins in the Don Valley near York, and about 10,000 settlers scattered from Kingston to the Niagara Escarpment with no legal system, land tenure or right to land. The Simcoes set up home in a two-room tent obtained from the estate of explorer, Captain Cook. Life was difficult. Simcoe paid tribute to his devoted wife, Elizabeth, who recorded life in Upper Canada both in water colour paintings (now housed in Toronto and England) and her diaries which provide an interesting reading for today's historians.

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<sup>2</sup>. We are grateful to Dorothy and Godfray De Lisle who recorded and transcribed Lieutenant Colonel Stevenson's presentation. It should be noted that as Stevenson played the role of Simcoe, the original speech was in the first person and has been changed here to the third person to provide the proper historical perspective.

As the first priority was to safeguard the land for settlers, Simcoe's garrison, the Queen's Rangers, built a line of forts along the Great Lakes. Settlers were hard to come by because of the international situation and the unwillingness to give up comforts and conveniences for the wilderness. The French and American Revolutions had occurred. In France, Napoleon was on the move into Italy. Russia was in a turbulent state, as was a lot of Europe. England, although one billion pounds [Sterling] in debt, was enjoying the Georgian Era. People listened to music by Handel and Bach, and admired the works of great artists. It was the time of Adams, Chippendale and Hepplewhite. Science flourished with discoveries by Dr. Jenner and Michael Faraday. There were gas lights and flush toilets. England was on the threshold of the Industrial Revolution. The British were master ship builders. Eight thousand oak trees were required to build a single ship which could last for fifty years as, for example, Lord Nelson's vessel, the H.M.S. Victory.

By contrast, the colony of Canada was a vast land, untamed and very sparsely populated. One blessing was that the United Empire Loyalists who chose to settle in Upper Canada possessed a vast repository of experience for starting farms, building dwellings, and getting educational and economic systems going. The bait for the settlers was to offer a minimum of two hundred acres of land absolutely free. After Lieutenant Colonel Simcoe was sworn in as Governor of Upper Canada by Osgoode, Minister of Justice in England, he began to take action to make sure King George did not lose Canada. The reformed Queen's Rangers played a significant role in building garrisons and major military roads: Yonge north to Lake Simcoe (named after his father) and Georgian Bay; and Dundas from Burlington Bay to London [Ontario]. Although Simcoe wanted London to become the capital, York was chosen due to the suitability of the harbour for transportation. He wanted to have the Indians form a buffer as they were friendly towards Britain for the protection of the King. Simcoe appointed various Loyalists to be lawyers so that a legal institution could be instituted. Tenure of land was implemented. While farms were getting started, the garrison supplied food and medical aid. Sawmills and gristmills (with stones imported from England) were built. The land was accurately surveyed and townships were marked out. Anglican churches were started in Kingston, York, and London. The seeds for education were planted although most children had to help on the farms.

When Governor Simcoe and Elizabeth departed in 1796, there were thirty houses in York, with a population of four hundred people in the area. Law and order were established – there were no jails! The first parliament buildings were built north on Parliament Street. There was a monetary system in place. It would not be until after the Battles of Trafalgar and Waterloo that immigration from England – as well as from other nations – would commence in earnest. By 1812, there was a population of 40,000 in Upper Canada. By then, the foundations of good government and administration, put in place by Simcoe, had taken hold. Mission accomplished!



**Left:** Lieutenant Colonel Michael Stevenson resplendent in the uniform of the Queen's Rangers, as Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe on the occasion of the 2003 May Social of The Cobourg and District Historical Society. Photograph by Dorothy De Lisle.

**Below:** A small piece of Ontario in England: Wolford Chapel was given to the people of Ontario in 1966. Photograph courtesy of Michael Stevenson.



## HISTORICAL SNIPPETS

by

John Jolie

Editor, *Historically Speaking*

☞ September 2002 – Number 173

**B**arns: Our newsletter editor, John Jolie, challenged the Society members to locate the two structures (illustrated below) and find out about them. Two members did just that and a lively discussion arose as to whether these buildings were “coach houses” or “barns.” Guest Speaker, Dr. John Carter offered a solution in describing them as “town barns.”



“Town Barn” at left faces onto Sydenham Street, belonging to the house on Bagot Street (northwest corner) built in 1875 by Thomas Gillbard. “Town Barn” at right faces onto Burke Street while the house faces Ball Street (northwest corner). House was built for Mr. Wray in 1888; present owner is only the third owner having purchased the house from Wray’s son.



☞ October 2002 – Number 174

**K**ing Street from Division Street: two photographs [not reproduced here] taken from the same location – one taken around the beginning of the twentieth century and the second in 1997 – illustrate the changes. In the older photo you can note the wooden sidewalks, the awnings on the sunny side (that is, the north side), the dirt road, the electric pole on the street, and limed intersections. The boys are shown wearing white shirts, the typical summer garb of the period. The women in the foreground wear enough attire to clothe



half a dozen people in today's summer outfits. The lack of vehicles, whether powered by horse or motor, is interesting. If you have a minute, stand in front of Liquidation World [the southeast corner of King and Division Streets] and note what has already changed in the last five years since the second photograph was taken.



☞ November 2002 – Number 175

**R**emembrance: Cobourg has had stars on stage and stars on the silver screen. Cobourg is also the birthplace of someone who had a movie based on parts of his life. That person was Francis Duffy, famous enough to have a statue at one of the most famous intersections in the world.

Patrick and Mary Duffy raised their children at their residence near King Street West and Forth Street. One of their 11 children was Francis, who went to work at the young age of 13 in the local woollen mill. His intellect was apparent and through hard work and scholarships he received a good education in Toronto and the United States. He became a priest and celebrated his first mass in St. Michael's Church, Cobourg, on September 6, 1896. After receiving his Doctor of Divinity degree, he taught in Washington. He served at Holy Cross Parish in New York City's entertainment district.

In 1914, Father Duffy became the chaplain to the 69<sup>th</sup> regiment, based in that city. Many in the regiment were of Irish descent. When the Americans entered the war in 1917, Duffy became the senior chaplain of Douglas MacArthur's Rainbow Division. He often chewed out junior chaplains who took unnecessary risks, but Duffy often ignored his own advice. On one occasion, the 69<sup>th</sup> moved into trenches at Rocroi, a "quiet sector." A week later, the Germans unleashed a tremendous barrage. Company E was sheltering in a bunker that received a direct hit, burying 25 men. In the rescue attempt, more soldiers were hit. Poet Joyce Kilmer asked Father Duffy if the men could remain buried where they fell. Duffy agreed. The priest made his way to what was left of the forward trench, still being hit with artillery fire. He conducted a memorial service among the fallen. Kilmer wrote a poem about the event, called "Rouge Bouquet," and presented it to Duffy (see below).

After the war, Father Duffy went on a speaking tour, and in 1919, stopped in Cobourg. He returned to New York City and became the pastor to Broadway personalities. When he died on June 26, 1932, his funeral in New York was said to have been the largest ever held in that city to that day.

One of the patriotic movies made during the Second World War was *The Fighting 69<sup>th</sup>*. It starred Pat O'Brien playing Father Duffy, who instilled discipline into a young and brash James Cagney.

**Sources:** Much of this material is from Lt.Col. C. Gordon King's talk to the Historical Society. It is to be found in the *Historical Review* 3 (1983-4). Another source is *The Detroit News* "This Week Magazine" March 26, 1967.

The following is the poem written by Joyce Kilmer:

*Rouge Bouquet*

*In a wood they call the Rouge Bouquet  
There is a new-made grave to-day,  
Built by neither spade nor pick  
Yet covered with earth ten metres thick.  
There lie many fighting men,  
Dead in their youthful prime,  
Never to laugh nor love again  
Nor taste the Summertime.  
For Death came flying through the air  
And stopped his fight at the dugout stair,  
Touched his prey and left them there,  
Clay to clay.  
He hid their bodies stealthily  
In the soil of the land they fought to free  
And fled away.  
Now over the grave abrupt and clear  
Three volleys ring;  
And perhaps there brave young spirits hear  
The bugle sing:  
"Go to sleep!  
Go to sleep!  
Slumber well where the shell screamed and fell.  
Let your rifles rest on the muddy floor,  
You will not need them any more.  
Danger's past;  
Now at last,  
Go to Sleep!"*

From *Joyce Kilmer: Poems, Essays and Letters*. Edited by Robert Cartes Holliday. 1918



**(Father) Duffy Square, New York City:**

One of the landmarks in the Big Apple is Times Square, created by Broadway slicing through the city's regular grid pattern. The second wedge at that intersection is Duffy Square with a statue of the priest from Cobourg.



☞ January 2003 – Number 176

**T**he birds invade Cobourg: It has now been half a century since Cobourg had its version of Alfred Hitchcock's suspense thriller and many residents do not know about it. Many years ago I had lunch at the East Collegiate with electronics teacher Garth Cane. It was he who told me about the event. Starlings had relocated to Cobourg in such numbers that their

invasion often made front page news in the *Cobourg Sentinel Star*.

The July 12, 1951 issue of that paper wrote this about the birds: Their “devastation to hats, coats, summer frocks, and the enamel of parked automobiles is appalling...some neighbours are battling bravely against fearful odds...Trinity United [Church] has built a defence by boarding birds from their roosts in the eaves...We watched one group of people in the east end doing a kind of ritual dance in the street with wooden clappers – whack, whack, whack...People were strafed, sidewalks were smeared.”

The sidewalks had to be hosed and scrubbed daily. The incessant noise of the birds is still vivid in people’s minds. A year later, the issue of August 28<sup>th</sup>, 1952 has a story about the heavy concentration on the birds on the lower end of College Street. The reporter wrote of one resident going out each evening and whacking on a can with a broken broom handle, trying to annoy the starlings so that they would leave. A truck with blaring loudspeakers went up and down the streets. It seems that the starlings would feed in the countryside all day and return to town each evening.

In telling this story, Garth Cane recollected that area farmers were invited to bring their shotguns for a final showdown. The town provided shotgun shells. The scene of groups of armed men walking up streets such as College and Chapel was surreal. Garth recalls shotgun pellets raining down, rustling the leaves. The smell of gunpowder hung in the air. These evening shootouts, continuing over several weeks, kept the starlings off balance. Dead starlings littered the neighbourhoods. The bird carcasses were unsightly and a health risk; they had to be gathered up. Eventually the starlings realized that the “Welcome to Cobourg” sign did not apply to them.

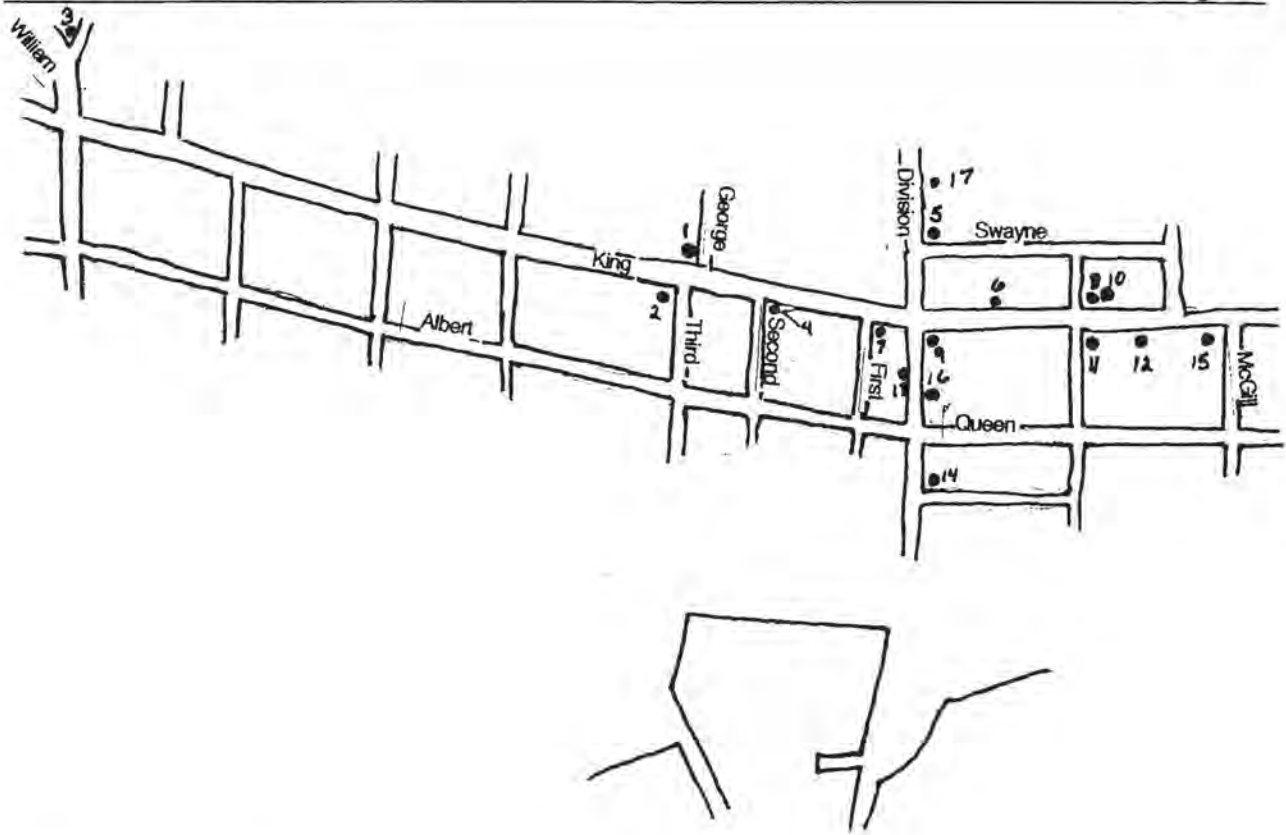


☞ February 2003 – Number 177

**A Road by any Other Name is...** Changes of street names are quite common. One only has to look at our own King Street. At one time it was called the “Kingston Road.” Before that, the 1824 Boswell map had the street labelled as “Front Street” or “King’s Street.” The 1832 map, drawn by Frederick Rubidge, had it named as “High York” or “King Street.” More recently, even the designation has changed from the “King’s Highway 2” to “County Road 2.”

**Hotels:** John Jolie, the Society’s current newsletter editor, has mapped the early hotels which were once in the downtown area of Cobourg. He cautions that this is a work in progress and not a definitive source!





### Cobourg Hotels:

Charles Dickens dropped into town in 1842. Where did he stay?

1. **British Hotel** (once the site of **George Strong's Inn** – George Street was named after him)
2. **Plaza** (once **Horton House, New Royal, Balmoral**)
3. The **Ontario House** (**Barnard Lilly's Hotel** – a relative of actress Beatrice Lilly); there in 1931; photograph in *Pioneer Inns and Taverns*.
4. **Paulwell's Hotel** where the CIBC is now located on King Street; on October 20, 1865, tightrope walker, John Denier, walked across Second Street from a window in the top floor of Victoria Hall to the top of the hotel – once with a wheelbarrow and once blindfolded.
5. **Windsor** burned in 1878 (3 firemen killed, 3 injured) and replaced first by **Dunham Hotel** and then **New Dunham** on same site.
6. **Albion / Steamboat** (a stage coach stop). Stagecoach magnate, William Weller bought the Steamboat in 1835 and renamed it the Albion in 1837.
7. **Commercial Hotel / Carpenter's Hotel** (burned in 1831). Apparently, Thomas Fowler found the accommodation in 1832 comfortable and the company agreeable.
8. **Buck's Tavern** burned down. Owner, Mr. Buck tried to rename our hamlet after himself, but his sign "BUCKVILLE" was torn down. (Historian E. Guillet placed this tavern at

- the site of the Capitol Theatre.)
9. **Cobourg Hotel** (later, the **Queen's**) had stables for horse exchange on the York-Kingston stage run. (According to the information with the CDHS photograph, the Queen's Hotel was on the southwest corner of King and Division Streets.)
  10. **Globe** was a five-structure which ran from 1845 to 1864 when fire destroyed it and an neighbouring building.
  11. **Columbian** (then the **Chateau**)
  12. **Arlington** 1874-1937. This hotel was the standard for all. Known as the Barracks because of its austere exterior, it was the best hotel between Toronto and Kingston. It sometimes had no vacancies for a year! The cream of society, Prime Ministers, a Governor General, and opera stars stayed there. Lord Dufferin and his wife, the Countess, stayed there during the week of September 5<sup>th</sup> -12<sup>th</sup> in 1874.
  13. **King Edward Hotel**
  14. **North American** (later, **Baltimore Hotel**) on the northeast corner of Division and Charles Streets.
  15. **Lakeview** had an annex at the back.
  16. **Taunton Hotel** on the east side of Division Street between King and Queen Streets.
  17. **Buchanan Hotel** just north of the Windsor on Division Street.

So, where did Charles Dickens stay when he visited Cobourg on hi North American tour of 1842? Charles Dickens did not sample our hotels, preferring to stay on the steamship. He did report, however, that Cobourg was "a cheerful thriving little town."



BALTIMORE HOTEL, COBOURG, ONTARIO CANADA

CICV



**Dunham House**  
Cobourg and District Historical  
Society 1991-2009



**Queen's Hotel**  
Cobourg and District Historical  
Society 1988-2010



☪ March 2003 – Number 178

**S**treetscapes I: As this area is rich in heritage homes with a wide range of styles, John Jolie offers a series of notes which focusses not on individual properties but on clusters of buildings.

We will start with the “**Jackson Style**” houses. Reuben Jackson was a bricklayer who came to Cobourg to work on the Armoury (now the police station) in 1904. The rounded corners of that building are part of his work.

Jackson stayed in Cobourg and built houses. These homes, often found in clusters around town, number 70 in all. They are typically brown brick, originally with a verandah in front. The gable structure is usually aligned to face the street and backyard. Today, many of the porches or verandahs have been altered. At first glance, one might think that Jackson emulated Henry Ford’s idea (you could get any colour you wanted as long as it was black). That is not quite true. There are variations, but Jackson did build similar houses to keep costs down. He did most of his construction from World War I through World War II. During the Depression, Reuben Jackson continued to build houses in those uncertain times to keep his workers employed. His last house was erected in 1946. Where do we find them? Look along Chapel Street (20 of them), Albert Street, Ball, Blake, Bond, King Street West, Mathew, Spring, University, Walton and William. The first house he built and lived in was on Albert. His last home was on Albert, too.

Note the good maintenance of those buildings. The residents obviously are proud to live in a “Jackson Style” house.

**Note:** This information came from the files in the Cobourg Public Library’s Local History Room. It was in a LACAC-Star column. Acknowledgement of the author cannot be given as the author’s name was cut off the article.



Reuben Jackson and Family in front of Jackson house on Chapel Street.



**T**he Loneliest Building in the Industrial Park. This month [March 2003] the Town purchased Northam Industrial Park. This complex was built as the Central Ordnance Depot, opening at the end of October, 1953. Later, the province operated it as an industrial park, but the name “Depot” has not disappeared. A housing complex across D’Arcy Street provided housing for the base. Okay, I’ve done my work. Now, here is your assignment: At the far south end of the park is a solitary structure. There are locked steel doors on the north side. The building, as you can see, has soil piled up around it. The structure is empty now. What purpose did it have?



According to Society member, Major (R) Angus Read, the building was used for monitoring the amount of radiation in the atmosphere.



☞ April 2003 – Number 179

**T**his tradition is fried. April has been the month when the area’s streams were filled with rainbow smelt. Smelt were an introduced species. Someone had the idea that smelt would be good food for the Atlantic salmon and released the smelt into the Great Lakes almost a century ago. At first, fishermen considered them to be a nuisance, but people quickly took to them. The prolific smelt were scooped up by the thousands during their frenzied spring run. The harvest was certainly a local tradition.

Seen any lately? It is not known for certain, but the zebra mussel is the main suspect in their disappearance. Smelt feed on tiny shrimp-like crustaceans called *diporeia*, but zebra mussels eat them too! *Diporeia* has been a main food source for many fish, but now it has virtually disappeared. Some scientists have also speculated about the release of large, introduced trophy fish, such as the Coho and Chinook as another predator of smelt. Sadly, it

may turn out that these salmon, a new species in the Great Lakes, could also be doomed as the bottom of the food chain disappears.

<http://www.mindfully.org/Water/Fish-Disappearing-Great-Lakes.htm>

[http://www.nativefish.org/Articles/Great\\_Lakes\\_Food.htm](http://www.nativefish.org/Articles/Great_Lakes_Food.htm)

**S**treetscapes II: An old, large neighbourhood in Cobourg which is changing quickly is "Corktown." This area, south of King Street and running from Victoria Park to D'Arcy Street, gained its nickname from the Irish immigrants who formed the bulk of the newcomers in the mid-nineteenth century who settled and lived in modest homes. Most of the original "cottages" have been altered or torn down in the last 150 years. They are not ostentatious. That being said, it is worth your time to take a walk along such streets as Bay, Perry, Henry and Green. On your walk, note the older houses and all the additions added as families and incomes grew. The lots were originally large, which provided ample space for vegetable gardens, wells and outbuildings and which made expansion easy. Today, the size of the lots have created urges to level old homes and build larger ones. Heritage preservation is never easy.



Henry Street

When you walk down a N-S road in Corktown, these blocks had only two lots. Severances have created quite a few more.



Perry Street



Bay Street

Many houses, with wood siding or brick facades, are covered with aluminum siding - the original material is often still on the walls.



☞ May 2003 – Number 180

**T**he year 1961. This was an eventful year. Jack Heenan was already Cobourg's mayor. In his final year in office, Premier Leslie Frost was busy cutting ribbons as a host of new Ontario schools opened to accommodate the leading edge of the baby boom now entering high school. Diefenbaker and Pearson were battling for supremacy in Ottawa. Newly elected President Kennedy and Nikita Khrushchev were testing each other. The Cold War was heating up with the abortive Bay of Pigs invasion. The first Soviet and American astronauts reached space.

1961 was also the year when a great barrier was built across the land. Fences and ditches made passage over the strip difficult; in fact, impossible. It was unlawful and dangerous to try to get across, except at designated points. Old roads, used for generations, dead-ended against that structure. Families who had lived side by side for generations became estranged. Farmers could no longer count on the help of long-time neighbours who had always been there to lend a hand. School children, once friends and classmates, were cut off from one another, even though some were only a stone's throw away from their old school or friend's home. Merchants fretted about a loss of business. The cost of construction was mind boggling.

Still, all of this disruption did not stop the excitement. You see, everything changes when the 401 opened up across Northumberland County during that summer of 1961.

**S**treetscapes III: There are clusters of these homes across Cobourg, indeed all over Canada. We take them for granted because they are so numerous.

The Depression severely limited housing construction; then in the Second World War, the economic frenzy created critical housing shortages. Towns with war-time industries were booming. Homes were almost impossible to get. Then, at war's end, returning veterans and their families needed accommodation. The result was "Wartime Housing" or "Victory Homes." The federal government and municipalities combined to construct housing on an unprecedented scale. Municipalities provided serviced lots for one dollar. In this area, rents ranged from \$22 to \$30, according to *Cobourg Star* papers of July 1946. The houses sold for about \$4,000.

The homes were massed produced. In some towns, you can see entire neighbourhoods of Victory homes. Indeed, some areas were called "Veterans Villages." The uniformity and lack of frills made the houses the closest thing to assembly line production that could be achieved. Simplicity counted. Cobourg has several clusters of Victory homes. Examples include, but are not limited to, Burnham, D'Arcy, Kent, Monk, Major, and University (near D'Arcy) Streets. They easily outnumber Jackson Style homes. There are some variations, but the aim was to erect homes as quickly as possible. Roofs lack dormers. Windows at the gable ends lit the second floor. Most roof lines in this area are quite steep. The siding was often aluminum.

Over the years, changes made by the homeowners have altered their appearance, but you can still identify the form of these homes. I am sure that in the future, the homeowners will happily relate their houses' place in Canadian history.

Further reading: John Blumenson *Ontario Architecture*





As part of our Heritage Days display at Northumberland Mall in February 2003, we highlighted several of the historic buildings which have been demolished during the past few years. One of these photographs was of the Lydia Pinkham building which used to stand on University Avenue (originally, the Model School). It was this photograph which prompted one of the visitors to provide us with a verse and the chorus of a ditty popular among British student nurses.

Little Willy was constipated  
He could hardly bear the pain.  
So they gave him veg-it-able compound  
See him smile as he pulls the chain!

*Chorus:*

We will drink a drink a drink'm  
to Lydia Pink a pink-a pinkham  
Saviour of the human race.  
She invented a veg-it-able compound  
efficacious in every case.

