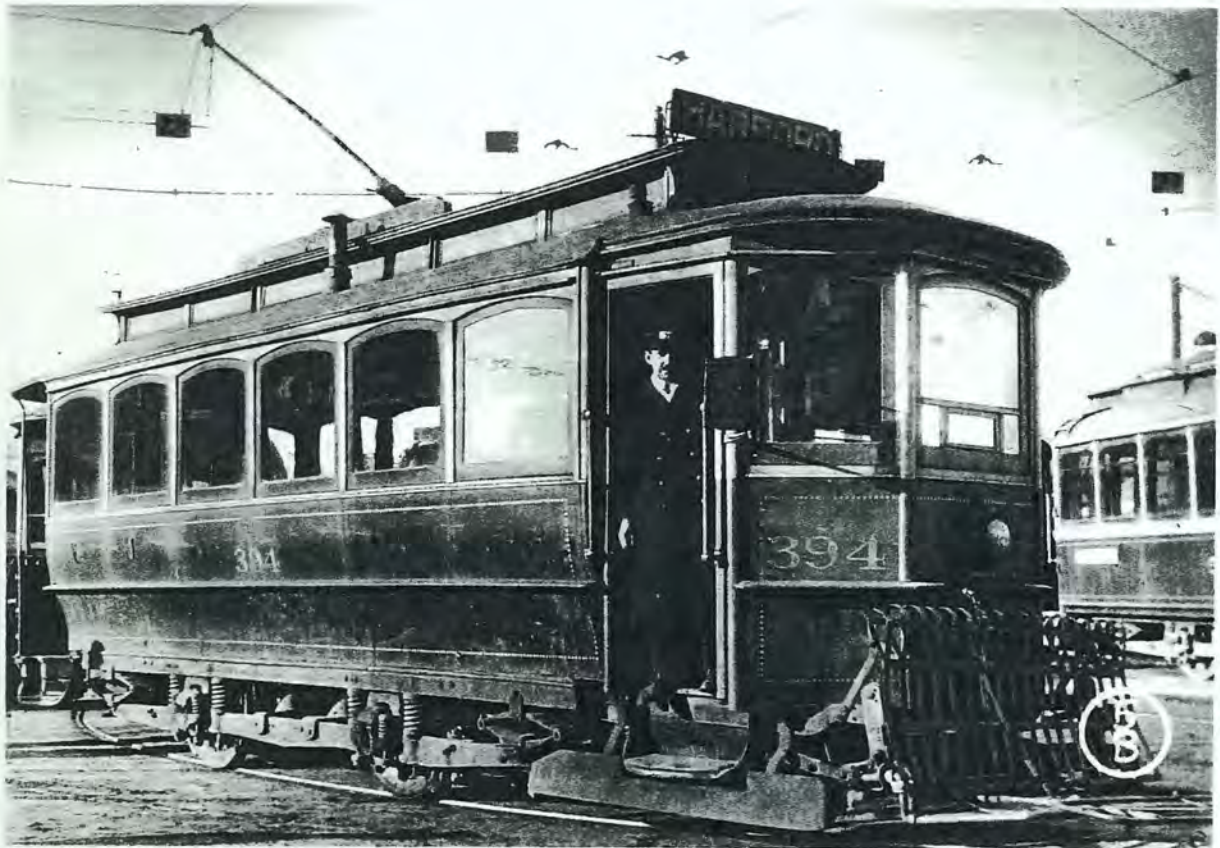
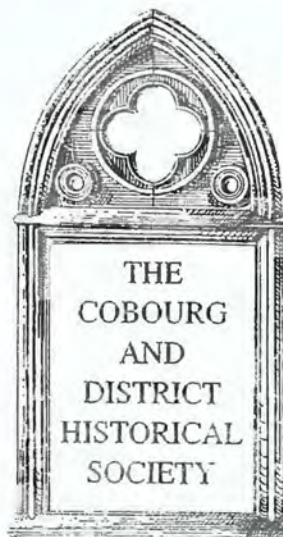


HISTORICAL REVIEW 21



2003



2004

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**THE COBOURG AND DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY
PROGRAMME OF SPEAKERS
2003 - 2004**

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Cover Photograph:

T.T.C. Car 394.
Built by Crossen Car Works, Cobourg, Ontario.
(Original photograph Toronto Transit Commission)

The Cobourg and District Historical Society Archives 1987-2004

BIOGRAPHY AS HISTORY

by
Jean Murray Cole

When I was at school, history was taught mostly in terms of politics, or wars, or exploration – lots of dates and broad generalities. Seldom was it represented in terms to which a teenager – or in fact anyone else – could relate. But in more recent years, social history, once in the lower orders of importance in the eyes of professional historians, began to be recognized as a legitimate way to look at the past.

Perhaps it was the preparations for the centennial of Confederation in 1967 which drew researchers, writers, and performers to look at the dramatic possibilities of Canada's story, to make it appealing to a popular audience in a way that professional historians had not done in the past. And to do this required real people, individuals through whom to tell the tales. Canada has an unlimited supply of colourful characters who represent important aspects of the country's history.

The upsurge of interest in social history had another effect too: local historians came into their own. They had always existed, those rather eccentric men and women burrowing away in anonymity in many small towns and villages across the land. They had been preserving the past of ordinary people, long overlooked by academic historians. Books (of varying quality) poured out of all parts of Canada in 1967, and have continued to do so since. Hundreds of wonderful characters have been unearthed and they have brought a new appreciation of history to many who had scarcely given it a thought before.

At the same time, and perhaps for the same reasons, local historical societies proliferated. When I first became involved with the Peterborough Historical Society in the late 1960s, it represented all of Peterborough County. Today, almost all of the townships have their own local societies, most of them holding monthly meetings and special events, some collecting archives and producing yet more books. Tourism statistics show that 'History' is now the biggest draw for tourists, although government agencies seem to be reluctant to recognize this and continue to give more promotion to sporting events or fishing.

I think we must all have noticed, too, how differently our history is presented today. Television is the big transformer, of course, with the numerous excellent documentaries and re-enacted films like the recent "Gathering Storm," with Albert Finney as a quite remarkable Winston Churchill, and the sometimes repeated Trudeau film with Colme Feore, or productions like the ambitious Canada series produced for the CBC by Mark Starowitz, much admired by some, less so by others.

Live theatre, too, has noticed history. In our own neighbourhood we have Rob Winslow's popular 4th Line Theatre at Millbrook, with its emphasis on the local scene and its

past, just one example of many throughout the country. Shakespeare, of course, has been presenting history on stage for centuries.

Here in Canada we have an increasing number of historical novels: Margaret Atwood's "Alias Grace" (although she seems to live more in the future than in the past these days); Wayne Johnson's "Colony of Unrequited Dreams" and "Navigator of New York"; Margaret Laurence's "The Diviners"; Jane Urquhart's "Away"; Alistair MacLeod's "No Great Mischiefs"; and Guy Vanderhaeghe's "The Englishman's Boy" and "The Last Crossing." We could all add to the list. In these novels the characters are central to the story, not just the events.

These novels are also a kind of biography, although there is lots of discussion and controversy about how far a novelist (or poet) should go in taking liberties with facts when using a real person as a character in a fictional tale. I have rather strong feelings about this: I think it is unfair to twist, and sometimes violate, the character of a real person who is known and documented, in the interests of the novelist's whim, but this is a subject much debated among writers.

When my husband first came to Trent University as Registrar in 1966, he also taught a course in Canadian History, a very popular subject at Trent. His background was as a political journalist and he decided that he would teach his section of the course 'biographically.' That is, he would choose a figure from history each week and work his way through the course outline. Some of his colleagues thought this was a rather novel approach, very unconventional, but his students grasped it enthusiastically. Individuals such as Alexander Mackenzie, Lord Selkirk, David Thompson, George Simpson, Lord Durham, Lord Elgin, Egerton Ryerson, John A. MacDonald, Sandford Fleming, Wilfrid Laurier, Alexander Graham Bell, John McCrae, William Osler, Mackenzie King and a host of others could provide the centrepieces for well-rounded discussions of the history of Canada. You will note that women were few and far between on our lists of 'important' figures from the past, but this omission is gradually being rectified. Research is more difficult in writing about women, but we are seeing more and more female biographies appearing. Witness the success of Charlotte Gray's "Sisters in the Wilderness."

In my own work, people have always been more important than events. History makes more sense when you find out something about the individuals involved and come to an understanding of why they behaved the way they did, and how their behaviour affected the eventual outcome, their role in history revealed.

My first foray into biography – aside from innumerable relatively short articles that were the product of newspaper and magazine interviews in my years as a journalist – was with Catharine Parr Traill. I continued in the magazine business after my marriage, but as the children began arriving, I left my full time job to be at home with them. I still did a little freelance as time allowed, but I had always been interested in biography and I wanted to attack a larger project that I could work on in my own time at home. For some reason, I felt some empathy with Catharine Parr Traill and found her to be an interesting and important subject. So

began my quest to explore her life beyond her published books. Unbeknownst to me, my husband's aunt, Alfreda Cole, who taught French at the University of Toronto, had been working on a biography of Mrs. Traill back in the 1930s. She died very suddenly before she had started to write the manuscript, but when her sisters heard that I was following the same path, they dug out her research papers from their attic and handed them over to me. Some of this material would no longer have been available in 1958 had she not preserved it. By the time we moved to Peterborough in 1966, I had made considerable progress. But one day, when I went to the National Archives in Ottawa to work on some Traill papers, my whole direction took an abrupt change.

While in Ottawa, I thought I would try to locate some papers relating to a McDonald ancestor of mine about whom I knew very little and, in fact, what I had heard left me very skeptical. He had written some obscure pamphlets relating to Selkirk's Red River Settlement, long out of print and unobtainable. I thought the National Archives would have copies and that it would be interesting to see them, and perhaps learn more about him. I wrote to Dr. Kaye Lamb, then the Dominion Archivist, to pave the way for my research.

Much to my surprise, when I arrived to sign in at the archives, the commissionaire looked and said, "Oh, Mrs. Cole, Dr. Lamb wants to see you," and he took me up in the elevator and ushered me into Dr. Lamb's office. I knew that Dr. Lamb had come to Ottawa from the British Columbia Archives, but I did not know at the time that Dr. Lamb was a fur trade specialist and had written widely on contemporaries of Archibald McDonald. He urged me to go to work on his story. "Forget about Catharine Parr Traill; someone else can do her. You must get to work on Archibald McDonald." He gave me many leads and told me where to go to begin locating McDonald papers, setting me off on one of the most enjoyable pursuits of my life.

It was probably fortuitous. Timing is all-important in the writing of books, and perhaps it wasn't yet the moment to introduce Catharine Parr Traill to a larger audience. Although many books and articles have been written about her over the years, it wasn't until Charlotte Gray wrote "Sisters in the Wilderness" a few years ago that Catharine and her sister, Susanna Moodie, really became household names. I did write about Catharine in shorter form, and made much use of her work in the interpretation of Hutchinson House Museum (owned by the Peterborough Historical Society), so that the earlier efforts were put to some use. However, for several years after that day in Ottawa, my concentration was all on Archibald McDonald and the fur trade in western Canada.

Along the way I have had a continuing interest in local history and have written much on that subject, but the fur trade still has its grip on me. My most recent book, "This Blessed Wilderness," returns to Archy McDonald; it is a collection of his letters written during his near quarter century in the Pacific Northwest (1822-1845).

Through the life story of this one man I soon realized one could interpret many aspects of the history of the country. Some of the stories his life tells are

- Selkirk's Red River Colony, the Highland Clearances in Scotland, sponsored settlement groups
- Early settler life
- The fur trade, the Hudson's Bay Company, voyageurs, canoe trips
- Native peoples, interdependence of Europeans and native Indians in the early years of exploration and fur trade
- The British Columbia salmon fishery, west coast lumbering
- Natural science, plant collecting, exploring expeditions
- The Métis, a "new nation"
- The opening of the west, westward migration, missionaries
- Canadian politics, rebellion of 1837, and so on (vicariously through newspapers)
- Montreal in the 1840s and 1850s.

All this and much more can be learned from one man's life.

Similarly, Sandford Fleming's life story is another one which touches on many aspects of Canadian history. My interest in him again relates to Hutchison House, which was Fleming's first home in Canada when he arrived as an 18-year-old with his brother to stay with their father's cousin, Dr. John Hutchison. At the museum we needed to know more about him, especially his Peterborough connections, to assist in our interpretation of the house. As a result, I did some research and wrote a paper for our volunteers, later published as one of the Peterborough Historical Society's annual Occasional Papers. Recently, when Patrick Watson featured Sandford Fleming in his "Canadians" History television series, the film-makers contacted me to lend a hand in the production, so again the research had multiple uses.

Fleming's life was extraordinary in its variety, touching on:

- Railway building
- Exploration
- Surveying
- Early Toronto
- Postal service (designer of the first Canadian postage stamp 1851)
- Mechanics Institute and the Royal Canadian Institute
- Westward expansion
- Ottawa politics
- Standard time
- The Pacific Cable
- Queen's University

What kind of young man was this who was to make such a mark on the map of Canada? He was infinitely curious, enterprising, energetic and enthusiastic. At eighteen his mind was constantly active – his early diaries are frequently illustrated with chess problems or sketches of his “inventions.” One of his early experiments was the “electrifying machine” he donated to St. John’s Anglican Church Bazaar in Peterborough in 1846, this in the year before Thomas Edison was born! Another drawing in his diary was of in-line skates, the precursor of those we see all over the streets these days, though his had wooden wheels which he realized would not do the trick.

Both of these life stories illustrate the crucial importance of letters and diaries in preserving the past. Both McDonald and Fleming were great letter writers and journal keepers (as was Catharine Parr Traill) and this is the reason we have actual documentation of these many aspects in their lives.

In McDonald’s case, Hudson’s Bay Company (HBC) practice decreed that all those in charge of HBC forts must keep daily post journals – in triplicate – with the intention that at least one would survive in case others were lost at sea or consumed in flames. One even encounters weather researchers poring over journals in the HBC archives in Winnipeg. The first things noted on any given day were usually temperature and weather conditions. And in fact, for some of the more reluctant (or less literate) recorders, it was sometimes the only thing which was written down.

McDonald was remarkable in that he enjoyed keeping a diary and his records are particularly valuable because they provide all kinds of detail that most of his colleagues didn’t dream of making note. His letters, too, were fulsome, and many were preserved by friends who received them just because they were so interesting and full of information and commentary. Edward Ermatinger, an old fur trade friend who retired early to a more sedentary life in St. Thomas, Ontario, kept all of McDonald’s rambling annual letters from the 1830s and 1840s, and many years later they found their way to archives in British Columbia and Oregon. (Incidentally, Ermatinger married Achsah, daughter of Cobourg’s Zacheus Burnham and sister of Rev. Mark Burnham who was for a time rector of the Anglican church in St. Thomas.)

To have personal papers to go along with the many held in the business papers of the Hudson’s Bay Company archives was a godsend for a biographer. I’m convinced that McDonald had no thought when he was writing them that his letters would be preserved and perused by readers more than a hundred and fifty years after his death. He wrote them from his wilderness home from the need to keep in touch with faraway friends, and to him they were much like conversations.

Fleming, too, had an addiction to his pen. He started his diary when he was eighteen years old, on New Year’s Day 1845, six months before he came to Canada, and to Peterborough. He kept up his journal-writing throughout his long, eventful life. Some entries, particularly in his busiest times, were rather cursory, but he seldom missed a day making some

sort of note. All (except the crucial [to us] 1846 journal, which is missing) are held in the National Archives in Ottawa. Many of his letters survive too, both in Ottawa and in the Queen's University archives and other repositories, along with numerous scientific papers he wrote over the years.

As his life went on, Fleming became more conscious of his public persona and no doubt coloured his writing style somewhat, though this in no way diminished the value of his papers. Fleming was certainly aware that his friend Lawrence J. Burpee was already at work on his biography when he died in Halifax in July 1915, and the book was published a year later. There have been other books about Fleming, but the definitive biography is yet to be written. He was one of our most engaging and accomplished early Canadians.

Biographies are not new, although their general tone had changed over the years. Burpee's book on Fleming was one of numerous biographies of important men that were published around the turn of the last century. They were usually about politicians (and sometimes, explorers) or at least had political overtones, and were invariably complimentary. Today's political writers and literary biographers – not to mention Hollywood scribes – seem to be coming more and more contentious. And readers are becoming more and more accepting of material once thought of as private, not public, interest. But this leads in other directions that I don't propose to follow. I will just leave you with these reflections drawn from my own experiences in learning about history through biography.

THE JUNO BEACH CENTRE: HOW IT ALL HAPPENED

by
Jan de Vries

During a return-to-Europe tour in 1955, members of the 14th Field Regiment Royal Canadian Artillery were very impressed with the respect shown for Canadian veterans by the children in Holland. The members of the 24th Field Regiment Association formed the 14th Field Children's Association with Garth Webb as its president, received charitable status, and arranged an exchange visit of Dutch and Canadian children.

It was this same year, while visiting Normandy and during a casual conversation with the Mayor of Berniè-sur-Mer, that both the mayor and members of the 14th Field Association decried the lack of Canadian content in the story of D-Day in Normandy. What came of that conversation was that the 14th Field Association would raise funds in Canada to purchase one of the famous buildings situated on the beach. The particular building available housed a restaurant. It would be renovated and turned into a museum. Members of the 14th Field Association approved the use of the Children's charitable status; the mayor agreed to help; and Garth Webb would start fund raising. The project was to be known as the *Canada Normandy Project*. It would require \$760,000 to make it happen.

Garth's idea was that the money could easily be raised from corporate sponsors such as Conrad Black. But by 1998, Garth had received no support from banks or corporations or others he had thought would be willing to donate. Garth then contacted various veterans and other persons with military connections to see if they would be interested in assisting. I, being one of the persons Garth contacted along with a few others, agreed to help. With Mackenzie Financial supplying information brochures, we went to work approaching friends, Legions, and other contacts, and funds began coming in. An application to the Year 2000 Millennium Fund was accepted and brought a pledge of \$209,000. We applied for, and were granted, \$45,000 from Heritage Canada for the web site design. A decision was made to sell memorial bricks. Veterans and other donors purchasing these bricks would have their names displayed on a memorial wall. It was about this time that the Board of Directors voted to change the name from the Canada Normandy Project to the **Juno Beach Centre** not just to reflect D-Day, but also to tell the total story of Canada's contribution to victory in WW II.

With more people on board, funds coming in, and with the agreement of the Mayor of Bernière-sur-Mer, it was decided to incorporate the Railway Station and to make other improvements. The target was now 1.7 million dollars. With more studies, it was found that this was still not satisfactory. An architect was approached who submitted a design concept of a building for free. Now the estimated costs rose to three million. This newly designed building would have a second floor which would be leased to the Canadian regiments which fought in Normandy to exhibit their artifacts. The Mayor of Bernière-sur-Mer said he would provide the land for the new building.

I personally approached my Battalion Association members and friends from all across Canada asking their help in promoting and raising funds for the project. Canadian Tire Corporation, being a Canadian company which we thought would be a good match as a corporate sponsor, was approached. We were turned down. Then Wal-Mart Canada was approached. Wal-mart was receptive from that moment onward. They pledged to raise 1.5 million dollars by promotions and fund raising programmes in their stores, and by doing so, made Canadians from coast to coast aware of the project. Little did anyone know that it would cost Wal-Mart two million in expenses to honour that pledge.

Garth, as president of the Association, planned a trip to Normandy to sign the deal for the new land. On arrival he found out that the mayor did not have the support of his council. Disaster! No land!

Salvation came with offers of land for a Canadian Museum by four neighbouring communities. The offer by the Mayor of Courselles-sur-Mer of two hectares of land was accepted and a renewable 99-year lease signed. Courselles is adjacent to Bernière and right on Juno Beach where Canadian troops came ashore on D-Day. Now, the existing building design we had was not satisfactory for the new parcel of land. Tenders were sent out to architects, interviews were held, and Brian Chamberlain of Burlington was selected.

Since there are numerous military museums in Normandy, a new and contemporary concept was required, and after reviewing proposals, interviewing prospective museology project managers, BR C+T and IN SITU from Montréal with an office in Paris, and COM et Graph of Normandy, were hired to design and construct the interior exhibits. The result: A beautiful, stylized concept of our country's emblem, the maple leaf; a modern educational and interactive computer-based facility for both adults and children telling of Canada's contribution to victory in WW II, and Canada in the world today. Now the estimated costs were five million. A French construction company, GCI, was hired as General Contractor.

We learned that due to French laws, a company in France had to be formed to conduct the business in France. A Board was set up headed by a Canadian living and working in Paris; a bank account was opened; and funds were transferred from Canada to the French bank for payment for work done on the project.

Promoting public awareness and fund raising continued both in Canada and France. Pledges were received from people in Normandy. Through contacts at the Canadian Embassy in Paris, a meeting was called to the Juno Beach Centre Project to representatives of various levels of French Government. The result was that three French government departments each pledged \$600,000 with the restrictions that the money could only be collected as the building progressed.

Before construction started, another problem raised its head. The land which was being provided for the Centre was originally a campground which was now being closed and the

campers being moved to another campground at the other end of the town. The campers protested thus causing some problems for the mayor. The protests eventually petered out, as by law the campers did not have rights to the land.

Then the September 11 tragedy struck and much pledged funding was diverted to support New York. As a result, donations to the Juno Centre declined and our hopes of having the Centre built for 2002 were dashed and the difficult decision of delaying the opening to 2003 had to be made. This decision was, in the long run, advantageous to us as it gave us more time to raise funds.

The early spring of 2002 saw the ground-breaking and construction begin! This enabled a dedication ceremony to be organized for June of 2002 which drew a lot of interest. The Juno Beach Centre was now known nationally.

Costs for the more complicated building design, interior exhibits, web site, and audio-visual equipment escalated to an estimated 8.1 million dollars. While grass root efforts had raised three and a half million, payments to the architect, interior designers, and initial construction were using up funds faster than donations were coming in and pledges released. We had no luck with the banks in obtaining a line of credit, but, when the Federal Government finally saw the light and realized the project was going to be a success and subsequently donated a million, one of the large banks relented and extended a line of credit. The Ontario Provincial Government announced just prior to November 11, 2002, a million dollar donation, followed by a donation from Alberta of \$100,000, and other provinces 25 thousand. Director Ted Davie, a retired Navy Captain, had numerous meetings with his contacts in Veterans Affairs, with the result being a pledge of almost two million in various methods of support, and to supply the guides for the Centre. In the spring of 2003, British Columbia came in with one million.

With the building being so complicated and the French working at their own pace, as the scheduled opening for June 6, 2003 approached, it looked like we would be holding a big ceremony at an incomplete building. Working late each of the days of the week before the opening, the construction crews and interior design people had the building essentially complete with most displays ready.

Canadian sculptor, Colin Gibson, who designed the eight-foot bronze memorial sculpture entitled "Remembrance and Renewal" which sits on a specially designed base in the front courtyard of the Centre, had kept us advised of the progress of his work over the couple of years prior to the opening. We had visited his studio and the foundry to see the sculpture in its various forms of completion.

The memorial brick programme was very successful. The 6,000 veteran, donor, and group bricks purchased are displayed on memorial kiosks which line the walk up to the entrance of the Centre. This programme is on-going and once the existing kiosks are filled further ones will be added to the group.

The web site www.junobeach.org is being up-dated. The site will allow people from all over the world to visit the Centre, locate the brick they purchased, learn of Canadian WW II history, and access many related sites.

Canada now has a beautiful WW II memorial and education centre which will tell Canada's story for generations to come. No longer will we be submerged in British and American history.

What started out as a small memorial to Canada's war effort has emerged into a unique Centre costing a little over 12 million dollars. Some of this increase was due to the rise in value of the Euro in relation to the Canadian dollar.

Programmes promoting the Centre continue both here and in France. In Europe, brochures are being placed in hotels, in other museums, with travel agents, and at travel conferences. Bookings are being made for tours for school groups in France and promotions for renting the all-purpose room for meetings and receptions are in effect. It is expected that the gate receipts will cover the day-to-day expenses of the Centre.

Enhancement to the surrounding area will eventually take place. The Mayor of Courseulles has indicated plans for direct foot access from the town to the Centre; an "Historic Walk" incorporating the German bunker which cost the Royal Winnipeg Rifles 100 casualties and the location where George VI, Churchill, and de Gaulle landed; and much more.

The official opening ceremony on June 6 of this year (2003) was an emotional event. Perhaps many of you watched it on television. The sight of our red and white Canadian flag against the clear blue sky being dropped by the Canadian Sky Hawks Parachute team in their red uniforms sent shivers through one's body. The flag was then run up the flag pole to open the ceremony. The combined bands and choir, all Canadian, were exceptional. The speeches by dignitaries were a little long but a necessary evil. The, thankfully short, march past by the 100 veterans received exuberant cheers from the attending crowd. The most emotional moment came at the close of the ceremony when 43,000 poppies representing the 43,000 Canadians killed in action during the war were dropped from a helicopter.

D-DAY RECOLLECTIONS
by
Jan de Vries
1st Canadian Parachute Battalion



Jan de Vries 1944



Jan de Vries 1945

June 5, 1944: Afternoon; windy; raining.

My Battalion Company "C" arrived at Harwell airfield in the UK. "C" Company was the assault company to lead the Battalion and Division into France by one half hour. We marched to the lined-up aircraft and found our parachutes which had been fitted the day before. Most of the men in each of the ten-men sticks (a stick is a group of paratroopers in a plane who are to jump) relieved themselves on the field. Then we loaded up our equipment, weapons, ammunition, and rations. In my case, as a bombardier in a section of ten men, I carried a Sten gun, seven spare magazines, four spare magazines for the Bren gunner, a two-inch mortar and six bombs, grenades of every type, rations for two days, wire cutters, trenching tool, gas mask, and water bottle. I think I went in with about 80 pounds of equipment. All this was covered over with a disposable sleeveless cloth smock to avoid the parachute lines snagging on the equipment. We put on our parachutes and were helped into the aircraft.

The last man to exit the aircraft on the jump entered first. The aircraft moved into position for the flight. The Albemarle bomber which was converted to troop carrier, had a limit of 10 men; low head room. A bomber was chosen to make the Germans think it was just another bombing raid. I sat facing the tail of the plane, knees to the back of the man in front. It was a noisy flight due to the aircraft motors. There was very little talking as we approached the French coast. What everyone was thinking, I had no idea. All I recall of my own thoughts was that I would be able to carry out my orders and not let my comrades down. We could see flashes of exploding anti-aircraft fire as we crossed the coast. We were bounced side to side as the pilot tried to avoid the anti-aircraft fire. Someone called out, "Red light" and a rush of activity took place. The first two men opened the two halves of the cover of the bath-tub sized hole and hooked them to the sides of the aircraft. The first two men to jump straddled the hole, feet placed one foot at each side; the third and fourth sat at each end with legs in the hole. The rest of the stick squirmed as close as possible and waited for the green light. It seemed forever, but, the green light came on about 0010 hours on June 6, 1944. Number 1 closed his legs and was gone closely followed by Number 2; Number 3 dove after them, followed by Number 4. Number 5 got caught up somehow and was slow to get out; others followed slowly. I believe I was Number 8 or 9. I dove out the hole worried about being at a distance from the other men in the stick.

It was very dark as I was dropping and I was looking for the ground when I landed with a thump. Quickly I got out my chute and made my way out of the field in which I landed. I lay beside a hedge and listened, hoping to hear men from my stick; nothing. I looked through the hedge and nothing which I was supposed to see; I had no idea where I was. Quietly I moved along a cart track wondering which direction to go. As I could hear aircraft above, and assuming that they were coming from the coast, I headed in the direction from which they were coming. I came to gravel roads and paved roads, and moved quietly into a field, ditch, or hedge whenever I heard the sound of footsteps or talking. I knew these were German patrols as our men would have been quiet. As I made my way, I tried to figure out what went wrong; why I was alone in a place where I could not recognize any of the features we had studied in the transit camp.

Just before daylight I met three men from my platoon moving along a hedgerow. We continued together and came to a large open area where gliders were landing. We now knew roughly where we were and headed east. We came under fire a couple of times, forcing us to jump into a ditch or drop flat to the ground. We never saw where the firing was coming from. Keeping low, we crossed a little stream and saw our first dead body. We finally arrived late in the day at our high ground defence position, Le Mensil crossroads, and reported to Company headquarters. The first thing I noticed on arrival at the crossroads was a quite large brickwork with a high chimney and kilns. Across the road from the brickworks was an orchard. A parachute was suspended from the hydro wires above the trees.

Out of 120 men in "C" Company who were to carry out the objectives only thirty-five landed on the drop zone. The rest were scattered, like myself, or captured or killed. Some

straggled in for days if they had managed to evade the Germans. The thirty-five men, led by officers and NCOs (non-commissioned officers), blew the two bridges, captured a German bunker and strong point, blew up a signal terminal and engaged a German headquarters while the rest of the Battalion and Division arrived. In the actions that took place, about half of those who took part were killed or wounded. When we were told of the battles which had taken place, the four of us cursed the pilot who had dropped us so far away.

My first order on arrival at our defence position was to locate where the Germans were. This I proceeded to do walking on the field side of the hedge leading south from where I was going to dig my trench. About halfway down the field I saw one of our snipers lying at the edge of the field, his rifle pointing to a bush at the far side of the field. He did not answer my call as I approached. When I went to step over him, I saw he was dead, a bullet in his forehead. I bent low and moved faster. Further along, looking through a hedgerow, I saw what appeared to be some kind of headquarters with many Germans milling around. This was what I was supposed to find. I quickly returned to our lines and reported the location of the Germans and where I had found our dead sniper. The information must have been sent quickly to the Navy in the Channel, which was our initial artillery. It wasn't much later that we could hear the big navy shells whistling overhead. On a subsequent patrol I found that the house the Germans had used as a headquarters had been destroyed and there was no sign of German troops.

My D-Day was completed by digging my slit trench in the dark in preparation for German counterattacks and shelling which took place the next day.

THE MARKHAM GANG

by
Paul Arculus

Introduction:

Thank you for your introduction and indeed for your invitation to speak here tonight. I consider it a great privilege to address you in Kivas Tully's magnificent Victoria Hall, and on this night (November 25, 2003) only a month away from the 157th anniversary of the laying of the foundation.

As you are aware, I live in Port Perry and our history shares a lot of common ground with Cobourg. Your first collector of customs here in Cobourg was George Perry, a cousin of Peter Perry. Names of early land grantees and settlers in Cobourg also occur in Port Perry's early settlement; names such as Burnham, Chisolm, Dulmage, Dumble and of course, Perry. Thomas Dumble, an early commissioner of the affairs of Cobourg, had a son I.H. Dumble who in 1869 accepted the contract to build the Port Whitby, Port Perry Railroad, a railway completely mired in corruption.

Your railway to Peterborough had its first run in 1854. Ours did not run until 1871.

Port Perry was named after its founder Peter Perry, one of the most important yet overlooked men of the early nineteenth century. He was the leader of Canada's first Reform party (Eat your heart out Preston Manning) a party that later became known as you guessed it- the Reform Alliance. Peter Perry was the leader of this movement. He was elected as the member of the Legislature for Lennox and Addington. He was a compatriot of a fiery and short tempered Scotsman (aren't they all?), William Lyon Mackenzie. They were both defeated in the infamous 1836 election. Mackenzie began to talk of militant means to bring about reform and spent much time in the United States drumming up support for the overthrow of the British. Perry parted company with Mackenzie. After all, Perry's father had been wounded at the battle of Bennington fighting against the rebels in the American Revolution. The Perrys lost their land, their home, all their possessions to the lawless rebels. He wanted nothing to do with anything American.

A few years ago, while searching through the Toronto newspapers of the 1840s, while trying to develop a biography of Reformer Peter Perry, I came across accounts of a group that became known as the Markham Gang. Their exploits dominated the April to July 1846 pages of the *British Colonist*, a prominent Toronto newspaper. They were given the name "Markham Gang" because the final roundup of several gang members took place in Markham and some of the gang members originated from that community. However, many members came from the nearby Townships of Pickering, Reach, Uxbridge and Whitby

The trials of gang members in 1845 and 1846 revealed that this was not an ordinary gang of hoodlums. They were highly organized. They had sworn oaths of secrecy and loyalty. They had methods of distributing and selling their stolen goods. The story becomes more compelling when gang members and their associates were accused of bribery and coercion of members of the judiciary and law enforcement officials. This was organized crime in the 1840s, an early "Mafia." The trials also revealed that the gang members were not idle ne'er-do-wells, they were successful merchants and businessmen and errant sons and daughters of respectable families.

Account of Morrow attack:

John Morrow and his Scottish wife Mary with their one-year-old daughter Margaret had taken possession of a two hundred acre parcel of land on lot eight in the seventh concession of Reach Township, in 1836. This is the present hamlet of Epsom. Here they built a humble log cabin. By 1845, the Morrrows had two more children and there was even a school in the hamlet.

On Thursday 7 November 1845 the Morrow family had left early to take some of their produce to the market at Uxbridge about six miles away. John managed to sell a team of oxen while Mary sold some sheep. After their return home, John Morrow decided to go to bed early, about seven o'clock. He couldn't be sure of the time because the clock was broken. Their youngest son was already asleep in their bed. John crawled in beside the child taking care not to awaken him. Their eleven-year old daughter Margaret and another son had already gone to bed in the room off the kitchen. Mary had much to do before retiring. She continued her work quietly and lost track of time as she busied herself in the kitchen.

Several hours later, she heard the sound of heavy footsteps - several footsteps. Mary was about to awaken her husband when the door was smashed open and came crashing onto the floor. In burst four men. The first man struck her with his closed fist, knocking her to the ground. The second quickly stepped to where her husband was sitting upright in bed. He swung at John with a large club, hitting him across the head several times. John managed to fend off the first blows with his hands but the shock of the entire situation put him at a distinct disadvantage. The attacker continued to beat him savagely. He grabbed John demanding that he hand over his money.

A third man, wearing a straw hat, charged into the children's bedroom and began searching through a chest, throwing its contents around the room. Even in the subdued light, twelve-year-old Margaret recognized this man as Nathan Case, a neighbour. Case ordered the children to stay in their bed. He returned to the kitchen where he began searching through its meager contents. Case put a gun to Mary's ear and pointed another at her husband and demanded that they hand over the money that they had gained at the Uxbridge fair.

John Morrow, now dazed, told Mary to hand them the money. She went to her purse, hidden under her pillow, and handed it to the third man. He snatched the purse and ripped it open,

taking out the roll of notes while the coins fell to the floor. He dropped to his knees and picked up the silver coins, putting them in his pocket.

The second man struck John on the head again. By this time John was almost senseless. He collapsed on the bed. Mary grabbed a pillow and thrust it on her husband's head in an effort to give him some protection from the assailant.

The young child who shared their bed started to cry. The assailant raised his club to strike him. Mary reached over to protect the child but her hand took the full force of the blow. Case ordered the Morrows to get off the bed. Bleeding profusely, John groped his way, staggering from chair to chair across the room. Mary stared intently at their assailant. The second man cursed her for looking at him and then hit John again with his club. Mary grabbed a chair and tried to strike her assailant. He swung at her, smashing the chair and then struck John again. John slumped to the ground, now totally senseless. Mary threw herself on her husband to protect him from further blows. John moved his hand and then his foot, and then lay completely still. By this time Mary was sobbing and begging for mercy. He struck her again, this time in the mouth, knocking out some of her teeth.

The other attackers made their way outside. The vicious one made his way slowly to the doorway. He returned to take another swing at John's seemingly lifeless body. Mary begged him to leave her husband's body alone. He knocked her down again and then walked into the darkness. Mary dragged herself after him to the doorway. To her horror she saw that there were more men, at least ten of them, all now walking away. They were in three groups each heading in a different direction.

In total despair Mary embraced the bloodied body of her husband. She experienced a small measure of consolation as she realized that he was still breathing. Margaret appeared. Together they tended the motionless body as best they could. Several hours later, just a short while before dawn, John regained consciousness.

Later in the day, John Morrow gave his neighbour an account of what had happened and then the two of them made their way to the local Magistrate, Abner Hurd, lived at Dayton's Corners (now Prince Albert) about five miles away. John was able to identify three of the men. They were neighbours, Nathan Case, Hiram Stoutenborough and his brother James Stoutenborough.

When John and his friend arrived back home Mary Morrow was hysterical. The harrowing events of the early hours of the morning, the physical beating and the emotional strain had now begun to extract an even more serious price. She ran about the house screaming. Together, James and John calmed her down and attended to her wounds. Two fingers of her right hand were broken. She had cuts and bruises on her head. Her mouth was swollen and she had several teeth missing and some broken.

News of the Morrow's painful experiences spread slowly. It was not until more than three months later that the attack on the Morrow family received any mention in the press. This occurred initially in the *British Colonist*.

Later, at the trial of the assault on the Morrow family, details were revealed that clearly indicated the attackers' knowledge of the affairs of the family: their knowing that Mary Morrow looked after the family savings and finances and that she had more money hidden away. In the subsequent trials it became apparent that an intricate system of information gathering had taken place before many of the crimes were committed. Couriers gathered the information in preparation for the robberies and other crimes committed. These were traveling salesmen, tradesmen and business people who roamed the countryside. In the more rural areas of the country, tailors, pedlars and even schoolteachers would visit a remote family and reside with that family while they put their skills to practice. Room and board would be considered as part payment for the goods or services. While carrying out their skills, they would make notes on the location of the family's assets.

According to the *Colonist*, one member of the gang visited homes on the pretext of being an itinerant Methodist preacher, praying with the host family and reading psalms, some of his own creation, in exchange for meals and a bed. While dispensing his religion, he found out all he could about the family's valuables and wealth.

Burglary at Scripture's in Whitby

Thomas Nelson Scripture was a respected tavern owner in Windsor, now Whitby. His first hotel in Whitby was built in 1828 and stood at the northeast corner of Dundas and Euclid Streets. He lived in a house on the northwest corner of Dunlop and Byron, not far from his hotel. Once he had arrived home Scripture followed his evening ritual of getting ready for bed. He made sure that the outside doors and all the windows were locked. He took the money from his pockets and placed it in a drawer in his living room dresser. He locked that drawer, placed the pocketbook and the keys back in his pantaloons and made his way down the hall to his bedroom. In this room he hung his pantaloons on a chair. He then went into the bedroom and crawled into bed. Thomas Nelson Scripture quickly fell into a deep sleep.

At about two o'clock in the morning he was awakened by a sound. He thought that someone was in the house. He called out but no one answered. On hearing another sound he got out of bed and then heard someone running down the hallway toward the front door. His pants had been stolen. Scripture briefly took up the chase in his nightwear.

Scripture then checked the living room dresser only to find that whoever had broken into his house had also opened the money drawer and had stolen the money there. The thief also made off with Scripture's pocketbook and a small amount of change.

Burglary at Smith's and Braithwaite's in Vaughan

John Smith lived on his farm on the first concession of Vaughan Township, exactly halfway between Thornhill and Richmond Hill, on lot 35 on the west side of Yonge Street. Customarily he went to bed relatively early, leaving his trousers on a chair beside his bed while he slept.

The robbers in this case were even stealthier than those in the Scripture robbery. They broke into his house while he was asleep and made their way to his bedroom. The robbers quietly removed his keys from the trousers pocket. One key opened a desk that was located off the bedroom. The intruders used the key to open a drawer in the desk and took "upwards of \$500." The thieves then made their way back through the bedroom and outside without disturbing Smith!

A neighbour of Smith's in Vaughan Township, John Braithwaite, lived near the hamlet of Maple. He was a faithful member of the local Methodist Church. On New Year's Eve, 1844, he attended a service at his chapel. While he was fulfilling his religious commitments, robbers broke into his house and removed a dresser in which he hid his money, and carried it into his back yard. The thieves then smashed open the back of the locked dresser and stole \$300. They were not as thorough as they could have been for they failed to find an additional \$700 that Braithwaite had hidden elsewhere in the dresser.

In my book I have documented many of the burglaries and robberies took place:

- Over a hundred bushels of grain from Casper Wilson (sometimes spelled Willson) just south of Brougham.
- A gun and some household possession from John Rogers near Sharon in East Gwillimbury Township.
- Rolls of cloth from John Nighswander's fulling mill on the West Duffin Creek in Pickering Township.

Forgery

Forgery and counterfeiting, a specialized crime, became an integral part of the Markham Gang's ventures. This craft was combined with the distribution and disposal of stolen goods. The thieves were instructed to avoid taking stolen goods to their own homes or to try to dispose of them in their own communities. In this way search warrants would produce no evidence. Gang members were frequently paid for their stolen property in counterfeit money. Other gang members not involved in a particular robbery were encouraged to take stolen goods to their homes and to pass them on even further for sale or disposal along with counterfeit money.

Horse Stealing, the Markham Gang Method

Sometime in early 1845, Thomas Alsop and Henry Johnson met near Brantford to arrange a phase of their horse stealing enterprise. Once all the details were finalized, they set out on their task. Henry Johnson went to visit his friend and accomplice, Aaron Street, in Newcastle. Street informed Johnson of the whereabouts of some of the best horses in the community. Johnson settled on stealing a "fine black horse." Alsop made his way into the western part of the province where he met with his cohorts John Hill and Boswell Johnson. Upon their advice he stole a grey horse that they knew about.

With their stolen horses in hand, Alsop and Henry Johnson quickly made their way back to the meeting point near Brantford. They exchanged horses and returned to the area from which each had stolen the original horse, Alsop in the west with Johnson's black horse and Johnson, with Alsop's grey horse, near Newcastle. Alsop sold his newly acquired black horse to a farmer near Brantford. Johnson sold the grey animal near Newcastle.

The two men returned to Brantford again to discuss the details of their sales. Alsop then made his way to the farm near Newcastle where he visited the man who had bought the grey horse from Johnson. Here Alsop claimed that the animal was his and that a man matching Johnson's description had stolen it from him. Alsop threatened to take out a warrant against the farmer if he did not return the animal to him. Convinced of the legalities of being in possession of a stolen horse, the farmer handed the horse back to Alsop. Johnson used the same tactic near Brantford and signed an affidavit to state that the horse was his and that a man matching Alsop's description had stolen it. Johnson and Alsop, once more in possession of the stolen horses, moved on to other locations to repeat the same scenario. Johnson sometimes traveled as far away as Michigan to sell a horse and Alsop ventured as far as Upper New York State. Johnson, no doubt would have been given information to help him to dispose of the animal, by fellow gang member, Robert Burr, who had moved to Port Huron, Michigan.

In addition to Henry Johnson, Thomas Alsop, Aaron Street, John Hill and Boswell Johnson, several other members of the gang were involved in the horse-stealing scheme. They included James Allan, John Briselain, James Pratt of London, John Moore of Montreal and Robert White of the Gore district.

The final publicized crime committed by a Markkham Gang member was a robbery and murder, which took place on the Main Street of Markham in December 1846.

To compound this and all other aspects of bringing the culprits to justice, members of the Markham Gang were bound by oaths of secrecy and loyalty. One of the reasons for much of the successful arrest and conviction of many Markham gang members was as a result of two of the members turning Queen's evidence. In the case of the attack on the Morrow family, James and Nathan Stoutenburg, Nathan Case and Robert Burr were sentenced to be hanged on 10 August 1846.

Stephen Elmore Crandell

Stephen Elmore Crandell is not to be confused with Stephen Crandell, a cousin, who settled in Clarke Township in the early 1830's and built a hotel at the southwest corner of Lot 28 in Concession 2 in that township. That two-storey hotel formed the basis of a community that sprang up and became known as Crandell's Corners and later as Newcastle. This Stephen Crandell appeared on the Clarke Township assessment roles from 1833 to 1837. Stephen was the son of Benjamin Crandell, a brother of Reuben. Reuben was the father of convicted felons, Stephen Elmore, Benjamin and George and was allegedly a member of the gang himself.

Stephen Elmore married Rosanna Brown of Cobourg, a sister of Henry Johnson's wife. After serving his term in the penitentiary, Stephen Elmore returned to his family in Port Perry and settled down to establish himself as a reputable cabinet-maker and later opened a hotel in Port Perry while continuing his trade as a cabinetmaker. The hotel was located where the Laurentian Bank now stands on the north side of Queen street, opposite Brock's store in Port Perry.

George Crandell

George Crandell, brother of Stephen Elmore, was released from the penitentiary in 1850 and became involved in shipbuilding at the Port Perry waterfront. He was employed as a shipwright in the first steamboat to appear on the Kawartha, the *Woodman*. Three years later, after a mysterious fire on board the vessel, he purchased it, remodeled it and began to build a steamboat empire. The following year, 1854, he married Lavinia Bower and the couple continued to live in Port Perry until 1866, when they moved to Lindsay to be in the heart of George's shipping businesses on Lake Scugog, Sturgeon Lake, Cameron Lake and Pigeon Lake. George became the principal and pre-eminent steamboat owner on the Trent-Severn waterway, owning numerous vessels. Initially he was mainly engaged in hauling lumber and other freight between Port Perry and the various ports on the system.¹ Later, as the tourist trade started to develop he became involved in transporting holiday makers. In 1876, he built the Sturgeon Point Hotel on Sturgeon Lake.²

Lavinia bore two sons, Frank and Fremont, before her death in 1885. George then married Henrietta Hopper and had five more children. In addition to building one of the most extensive and successful steamboat enterprises in Ontario, he served as an alderman in the city of Lindsay. He died on 22 January 1904. His obituary indicated that his criminal past had been completely forgotten.

¹ Paul Arculus, *Steamboats on Scugog*, Port Perry, 2000, Pp 33-46, 63-82, etc.

² A Respectable Ditch,....p.158.

Johnson

Henry Johnson, who appeared to take a leadership role in the Markham Gang's activities, was sentenced to four years in Kingston. On his release, he returned to his father's farm home on Lot 23, Concession 9 in Markham. He apparently made every effort to hide his criminal past and settled down to a life of respectability. Cornelius, Henry's father, had extensive land holdings in Markham including the Concession 9 property. In 1851, shortly after his release from gaol, Henry built a large ornate and impressive house that stands on the property today and which is still occupied by his descendants. Cornelius Johnson died on 13 February 1858 and left the Markham properties to his son Henry.³ Henry's elder brother John inherited his father's 150 acre Pickering property in Lot 27, Concession 6. That impressive home is still owned by a family descendant.

Pennock

Trueman Pennock was arrested and incarcerated in the Toronto gaol on 4 June 1845. He was listed as prisoner #237 and was charged with burglary and released on bail on 18 June and ordered to return for trial at the following assizes. At the time he was recorded as living on the 3rd concession of Markham. There is no record of any further court appearance by Pennock. George Gurnett interviewed him in Markham, on Tuesday, 24 November during the investigation of the murder of McPhillips. Why he was not further detained at that time over his failure to appear in court to face the charges against him is not clear. There are no judicial or criminal records of him after that date. The last known reference to Trueman Pennock is in Brown's Directory of 1846-47. It has him listed as living in Lot 15 on the sixth Concession of Markham. It appears that there are no references to him in the assessment and census records after that time.

In Markham, on 7 December 1859, Jane Pennock, Trueman Pennock's wife was listed as a widow although there are no known records of Trueman Pennock's death. On that date Jane Pennock married 27-year-old John Morrow with Johanna and Susan Ekhart as the signed witnesses. The minister was Uriel Graves, of the Evangelical Association.⁴ Trueman Pennock's great, great grandson suggests the possibility that Trueman could have falsified a death certificate, or divorced his wife, assumed a new identity as John Morrow and then re-married his wife under the assumed name.⁵ If this is the case, the choice of the assumed name, John Morrow, is bizarre. The real John Morrow was the victim of the one of the major and more sadistic crimes of the Markham Gang.

³ Will of Cornelius Johnson. PAO: Wills, Markham Township, MS 638, Reel 86

⁴ Markham District Historical Museum, Return of Marriages, 1859.

⁵ Gordon Rae Pennock, in correspondence with the author.

To add to the mystery of Trueman Pennock: at the Grace Anglican Church in Markham, on 24 August 1864, Catherine Pennock was baptized. Her date of birth is registered as 10 July 1854⁶ and the father was registered as Trueman Pennock.

White

Ira White, father of Truman and Lorenzo, was arrested and incarcerated over his alleged support of Mackenzie in 1837. After his hearing he was released and went on to establish his respectability as a mill owner in Unionville. He later passed this business on to his son Robert Benjamin and then to his son-in-law Hugh Crosby.⁷

Truman White was indicted for, among others, the separate robberies of Oliver Wilson, Isa Post and John Lumsden. His brother Lorenzo was indicted for the robberies of John Haight, John Nighswander and John Lumsden.

While Trueman Pennock faded into the landscape, his close friend Truman Pennock White merely moved from Markham to Pickering in 1845. In the nearby community of Majorville, T. P. White bought property on Duffin's Creek and obtained the water rights, enabling him to build a gristmill. This business enterprise proved so successful that he expanded his facility to include a planing mill in 1866. The following year he built a huge brick woolen mill. He later leased out his mills. The planing and woolen mills were later destroyed by fire.⁸ There are no records of Truman White ever appearing in court to face the numerous charges against him and there are no records of any charges being dismissed. Ira and Truman's successes in their respective milling business and the fact that they employed many workers may have been in issue in having the numerous charges against Truman Pennock White overlooked. But this is mere speculation.

In spite of his criminal past, the popularity and respect that Truman Pennock White had earned as a businessman enabled him to be elected to the Pickering Township Council in 1851. He went on to serve as the Reeve of Pickering for sixteen years, the longest serving Reeve in Pickering. He became a County Warden in 1861. He even ventured into federal politics by becoming the riding's Reform candidate in the 1872 election. In a bitter campaign, he lost to the Liberal party's Oshawa candidate T. N. Gibbs, the incumbent. Nevertheless, the people of Majorville honoured Truman Pennock White by renaming their community Whitevale.

In the late 1870s, T. P. White, Casper Stotts, the gang member who turned Queen's evidence and Casper Wilson, the burglary victim of gang member John Spencer, all were neighbours living on the same concession road that runs through Whitevale.

⁶ Anglican Church Archives, Toronto, Baptism Records Grace Church Markham, Reel 87-2.

⁷ Isabel Champion, *Markham 1793-1900*, op cit., Pp. 126 & 301.

⁸ William R. Wood, *Past Years in Pickering*, Toronto: William Briggs, 1911. Pp 154, 308.

Vanzant

William Vanzant was found guilty on two separate charges of theft. He was sentenced, on 6 June 1846, to seven years hard labour in the penitentiary. Upon his release, he returned to his wife Sarah and their eight children in Uxbridge. William and Sarah produced one more child, Albert, who was born on 31 March 1852. They had named their sixth child Garrat Robert in honour of William's father Garrat who died in 1858 at the age of 98. Garrat Robert Vanzant married eighteen-year-old Catherine Napier in 1863. Catherine was the daughter of Alexander Napier, a surgeon in the 93rd Highlanders. Garrat ventured into business as a hardware merchant in Stouffville in 1864 but later re-established himself in Markham. He gained considerable experience in politics, serving as a member of the municipal council of Markham and then as its reeve in 1883, 1888 and 1890. One of the interesting ironies of this study is that he was appointed Governor of the Toronto Gaol in 1900.⁹

Unfortunately, the criminal role model of his father did not pass unheeded. In 1907, in a widely publicized scandal, Garrat Vanzant was found "Guilty of improper conduct, incompetencies and irregularities and lack of discipline..."¹⁰ in his administration of the Toronto Gaol. At the same time he was accused of "...certain financial transactions with prisoners..." The latter charge was dismissed. Nevertheless, on the basis of his guilt on the former counts, Garrat was fired as governor of the Toronto Gaol and replaced by a vice president of the Upper Canada Bible Society, the Reverend Dr. Andrew B. Chambers.

The story of this gang and its activities quickly disappeared from public view.

Regarding the gang members sentenced to death for their attack on the Morrow family, on August 4, less than a week before their execution, a brief note appeared in the Toronto newspapers which stated that their sentences had been commuted to life in prison. On August 12 they were transported to Kingston Pen. In 1853, only seven years after their convictions, the four were all quietly released. Today, all of the court records of the trials of the Markham Gang members are missing. The Penitentiary records are missing. The only accounts available are those in the newspapers of 1845-1846. There are no records of their activities in today's historical accounts. Is this a result of the fact that those convicted were prominent and successful business people? Were records destroyed on purpose? I leave this question for you to answer.

⁹ *Globe*, Toronto, 8 June 1907.

¹⁰ *Commemorative Biographical Record of the County of York*, Ontario, J.H. Beers & Co., 1907.

THE CROSSEN CAR COMPANIES

by
Allan (Ted) Rafuse

James Crossen in 1866 little realized that his successful local business in Cobourg, Upper Canada would, in the next quarter century, expand to become the largest independent manufacturer of wooden railway passenger and freight cars in the Dominion of Canada. His company's growth reflects Crossen's personal attributes of adventure, determination and persistence, all of which were part of his earliest life experiences.

James Crossen was born in 1826 in Comber, County Down, Northern Ireland to James senior and his wife Mary. In 1842, at 16 years of age, young James accompanied his parents and siblings on a marine venture across the Atlantic Ocean. Upon arrival in New York city a land adventure followed and all arrived safely in Batavia, New York where the family settled. The following year, James Crossen junior appeared in Cobourg, perhaps to visit cousins. Whatever the reason for his trip, he accepted a job in the Helm Foundry as an iron finisher. Largely an unskilled task this job required much grinding and filing of the forged iron castings. During the next several years, through hard work and knowledge retention, he gained skills which gave him the practical, if not the licenced, skills of an engineer.

As part of his job training Crossen travelled throughout Northumberland and Durham fitting out regional mills with castings. Through these journeys he extended his business skills and observed the natural resources of the area. As he matured in mercantile experience Crossen accepted an offer of a partnership in the Helm Foundry. Following shortly thereafter, the Helm Foundry was reorganized as the Ontario Foundry. By 1865 James Crossen had become the sole proprietor of the company.¹ At age 39, Crossen was a prominent and prosperous resident of Cobourg and the president of one of the area's most successful industrial enterprises. Commercially and personally he had attained a comfortable position and could well be satisfied with his accomplishments. But resting was not the nature of the man.

During the mid-1860s many Cobourg citizens were actively engaged in attempting to resuscitate their dormant Cobourg & Peterborough Railway (C&PRy). As part of the revival, the ore beds at Marmora were haltingly developed. The railway company needed ore cars to remove the Marmora mineral to the harbour at Cobourg for transshipment across Lake Ontario. Crossen was approached by the Cobourg, Peterborough & Marmora Railway and Mining Company who had purchased the C&PRy in January 1867 to construct the necessary rail cars. Although he had never previously constructed such devices, he agreed to do so and construction of the cars began early in February.

Why Crossen decided to enter railway car construction is unknown. Several explanations are plausible. He was well aware of the forging business and perhaps saw this new

¹ Northumberland & Durham Directory, 1865.

field as an adventure and a potential source of new business. He was well aware of the timber resources of the area and the location of wood supplies required in car construction. At the time, as there was no alternative local firm which could provide serious competition, he may well have felt he had an economic advantage in gaining a contract over any other possible manufacturer. And the principals in the railway company perhaps anticipated that a more reasonable business arrangement could be made with a local firm rather than a distant business.

The construction of these railway cars was not straightforward. The castings were forged at the Ontario Foundry which in 1866 occupied a section of property on College Street just north of King Street in the area of St. Peter's Church. The C&PRy curved out of the harbour and proceeded north along Railroad (Spring) Street some distance from the Ontario Foundry. Through a subcontract, the cars were actually erected at the harbour by a Mr. Munson who had his woodworking facility adjacent to the C&PRy line there. Presumably the forgings from the foundry were brought to the harbour area for incorporation into cars under construction. During the first half of 1867 Crossen produced 100 four-wheeled ore cars for the railway company.

There is no indication that Crossen gained new railway contracts in the next several years. The Ontario Foundry continued to be successful in providing agricultural implements to the surrounding area. There is no confirming evidence, but he may well have constructed some box and platform (flat) cars for the Cobourg, Peterborough & Marmora Railway & Mining Company (CP&MR&MCo), the American company which had purchased the Cobourg & Peterborough Railway. Early in 1870, the *Cobourg World* proudly reported that James Crossen had obtained a contract with the Canada Rolling Stock Company of Montreal to erect 200 box cars for the Grand Trunk Railway of Canada.² Such a large contract taxed the facilities of the Ontario Foundry at its College Street location.

To alleviate the limited space, Crossen purchased land on Seminary (University) Street at the top of Railroad (Spring) Street. The new location allowed for a direct connection from the Crossen plant to the CP&MR&MCo tracks and thence to the Grand Trunk Railway (GTR) tracks. On this site he built several wooden buildings designed specifically for the erection of railway cars. One of these buildings measured 50 by 170 feet. Sixty men were hired and work commenced immediately. The contract had a value of \$160,000 and Crossen had 14 months in which to complete construction of the cars. Ten weeks later the first four cars were delivered and by the end of December all 200 cars had been delivered two months in advance of the contract deadline. There was little doubt that with this order Crossen crossed a threshold and became known in the railway world as a competent builder of railway rolling stock.

In 1871, further rolling stock orders were won by Crossen, including 200 flat cars for the Canada Rolling Stock Company of Montreal, 50 flat cars for the Toronto Grey and Bruce Railway, a total of 40 flat and 10 grain (box) cars for the Whitby & Port Perry Railway and 20

² *Cobourg World*, 14 January, 1870.

box cars for the Midland Railway of Canada. Crossen also ventured into the field of passenger car construction this year with a coach constructed for the CP&MR&MCo. Unfortunately there is no record of this car's history but presumable it mirrored other similar cars of the era with open vestibules at either end and a length of 45 to 50 feet. By the end of the year Crossen erected additional buildings on the site to coördinate further the construction of railway cars.

By late 1872, Crossen undertook a re-organization of his enterprises. The facilities at College Street and on Seminary Street were separated. The Ontario Foundry continued as a separate enterprise until at least 1877. The company and buildings on Seminary Street were organized as the Crossen Car Company. Almost immediately a large volume of new orders were won. Crossen secured an order totalling \$500,000 to forge 1000 trucks and erect 100 box cars for the Grand Trunk Railway. Once again Crossen delivered the items with months to spare.

A federal election in 1874 witnessed the formation of a government led by Alexander Mackenzie and the Liberals. They adopted a railway policy of purchasing items only when sufficient cash was on hand to pay for equipment. In the aftermath of a general depression there were few orders for rolling stock forthcoming. Further compounding Crossen's lack of orders was the government policy of free trade which allowed rolling stock to be imported by Canadian railways from the United States. American businesses were larger and presumably more efficient due to scale and thus were able to undercut prices established by Canadian firms. In spite of these challenges the Crossen Car Company persisted in obtaining some contracts from the GTR for new rolling stock, primarily box and flat cars. However times were difficult for the men at the plant who witnessed long periods of layoffs due to lack of contracts and therefore lack of work.

In the mid 1870s the Crossen Car Company constructed two cars for the Belleville Street Railway, a small number of flat cars for the Belleville & North Hastings Railway, 200 box cars for the Intercolonial Railway (ICR) and for the Quebec, Montreal, Ottawa & Occidental Railway (QM)&ORy) a small order of box and flat cars as well as Crossen's first two rotary snow plows. Also constructed were an unstated number of flat cars, the first for the Pacific Railway which was then under construction in various parts of western Canada.

Perhaps due in part to the scarcity of contracts Crossen sought tax relief from the local municipality. He had informed the local politicians that he had an opportunity to move his manufacturing facility to Port Hope where the Midland Railway Car Shops, with newer equipment, was being offered to him at favourable terms. Following extended negotiations, terms agreeable to both parties were concluded allowing Crossen tax free incentives except from school taxes. Consequently the Crossen Car Company remained in Cobourg for the rest of its existence. Crossen immediately commenced construction of several new large wooden and brick structures on the property, which, including fixtures, amounted to an expenditure of more than \$16,000.³

³ *Cobourg Sentinel*, 24 August, 26 October, 1878

1878 witnessed a federal election with John A. Macdonald and the Conservatives forming a new government. Their National Policy afforded Canadian manufacturers some tax protection from U.S. competition. Immediately the Crossen Car Company was provided with an opportunity to compete favourably with such U.S. firms as Barney & Smith and the Pullman Company.

The Crossen Car Company erected one first class passenger car for the GTR in each of 1876 and 1877.⁴ In July 1879 a first class passenger car ordered by the QMO&ORy was delivered at a cost of \$4,750⁵ in Montreal with much fanfare and prosaic accolades. The *Montreal Gazette* reported in part: "The car is a beautiful specimen of artistic design carried out to a complete fulfillment."⁶ The *Montreal Witness* was even more glowing and provides a detailed visual impression:

The Car is coloured a dark yellow, striped with lake red, and on either side a handsomely painted panel adds to the finished appearance. The sides are fitted with bird's eye maple, panelled in black walnut and rosewood, decorated with gold. There are three layers of flooring, the lower floor is made of pine, and serves to deaden the sound made by the wheels; the second or middle floor, also of pine, adds to the comfort of the car by keeping out the cold winter winds; above this is the third floor, made of oak, the brightly polished surface of which presents a very neat and attractive appearance.

The seats are upholstered in rich maroon plush, bordered with green. Each seat is fitted with a patent curved arm-rest, nickel plated, and elliptical steel springs take the place of the ordinary spirals. From the ceiling descend four bright silver-plated, Hitchcock patent lamps, regulated by automatic attachments, that illuminate the car with so bright a light that one can read as comfortably as if in one's own parlour lighted with gas. The car is heated by steam, generated in a Baker heater which occupies an enclosed compartment at one end of the car.

Another improvement is the absence of a window at the end thereby eliminating a great proportion of the smoke and dust which enters by these windows much to the annoyance railway travellers. These have been replaced by handsome panels of black walnut. The side windows are large and furnish an abundant supply of light. The sashes and frames of these are of cherry. The ventilators are fitted with brass wire gauze, and effectively prevent the entrance of sparks or cinders from the locomotive.⁷

The Tilley Tariff aided in the winning of new contracts. Freight cars for the Midland Railway of Canada, the Central Canada Railway (CCR), and the John Ryan & Co, contractors

⁴ Lepkey & West, CNRPE, 282.

⁵ *Cobourg Sentinel*, 15 August, 1879.

⁶ Tulumello, "James Crossen and the Cobourg Car Works," 61.

⁷ *Cobourg Sentinel*, 2 August, 1879.

on the Canada Pacific Railway, were built in 1879. The CCR and the QMO&ORy purchased a number of passenger rolling stock including first class, second class, smoking and mail-express cars.

With an expanding demand for passenger cars, with exemption from local taxes for several years, and with competitive costs assured by the Tilley Tarrif, James Crossen, late in 1879, commenced construction of several new buildings on his site to enhance his production capabilities. These new buildings more than tripled the size of his plant and transformed the car manufacturing operations. Several hundred men were eventually employed. All aspects of car construction were manufactured on site save for the springs and axles of the car trucks. Crossen's enterprise created Cobourg's largest industry and an important national manufacturing plant.

Fire caused havoc to the premises in 1881. Loss amounted to \$40,000 in buildings and equipment about 40% of which was insured. An indication of the vitality of the company is best indicated by what was lost in the fire: three vans (caboose) for the Midland Railway; two smoking and passenger cars, two first class cars and one official car for the Credit Valley Railway. Immediately Crossen rebuilt the plant. Allowing for the normal fluctuations of demands for railway rolling stock, the Crossen company quickly gained a solid and reliable reputation in car construction. The company proved a profitable enterprise during the 1880s.

Early in 1882 Crossen built an official car for William Cornelius Van Horne the newly appointed General Manager of the Canadian Pacific Railway. Van Horne was charged with constructing the CPR across Canada. His car was unusual in the fact that it was created from two previously constructed cars acquired from the St. Lawrence & Ottawa Railway shortly after this latter company was purchased by the CPR. Van Horne used this Crossen rebuilt car when in the west throughout the construction phase of the CPR. In mid 1885 a new car was constructed for Van Horne but the Crossen rebuild remained on the CPR roster until it was sold privately in 1956. Today, following a unique history, this car is on display at the Fort La Reine Museum in Portage La Prairie, Manitoba.

Once the transcontinental CPR was completed, Crossen received many orders during the late 1880s from the neophyte company. During this decade an unknown quantity of freight cars and 211 passenger cars including first and second class cars, combination cars, colonist cars, sleeping cars and dining cars were constructed. Especially with regards to the latter, Crossen was often in communication with T.G. Shaughnessey, Superintendent of the CPR with regards to materials to be used in construction. The company's first sleeping cars, *Chaudiere* and *Vancouver* were erected in 1885 at a cost of \$13,400 each. The following year Crossen's first dining cars were delivered to the CPR. *Buckingham*, *Claremont* and *St. James*. In addition to the cars constructed for the CPR, Crossen constructed passenger cars for the Intercolonial Railway, the Grand Trunk Railway, the Northern & Northwestern Railway, The Temiscouata Railway, the Central Ontario Railway, the Northern Pacific & Manitoba Railway, the Quebec Central Railway, the Drummond County Railway and the Great Western Railway.

By the end of the 1880s the Crossen Car Company had become Canada's largest manufacturer of wooden railway rolling stock. Crossen was enjoying his success and at age 65 remained the sole principal in the company. His two sons had been brought into the company but James remained firmly in control. William was most involved working full time at the Company's office while Frederick was a student at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and worked on site during the summer months.

On Tuesday, December 9, 1890, James Crossen died suddenly of cerebral apoplexy in Montreal at the home of a friend. At the time he was returning from a trip to Boston where he had been visiting his younger son who had become seriously ill. Accolades from newspapers across the country suggest the acclaim and respect James Crossen's Car Company had won.

It is not saying too much that the cars turned out of Crossen's Car Works are ranked amongst the best in use upon this continent.⁸

Nearly every railroad in Canada, large and small, has drawn some of its rolling stock from Cobourg, from the coal hoppers used at Lethbridge, N.W.T., and Springhill, N.S., to the transcontinental trains from the Atlantic to the Pacific. The work upon these cars, their convenience and perfect running, and the beauty and elegance of finish have never been excelled in America—but of these facts the travelling public are themselves quite well aware.⁹

With the founder's death, the company was reorganized as the Crossen Car Manufacturing Company of Cobourg with William Crossen as president. The CPR continued to be a significant purchaser of passenger equipment but this abated as the CPR developed its own car shops at its Hochelaga and Angus sites in Montreal. Minor passenger equipment orders were received during the 1890s from the Dominion Atlantic Railway, the Canada Atlantic Railway, the Victoria & Sydney Railway, the Quebec Central Railway, the Intercolonial Railway, the Toronto, Hamilton & Buffalo Railway, the Tillsonburg & Lake Erie Railway, the Lake Erie & Detroit River Railway and Port Arthur, Duluth & Winnipeg Railway.

Freight cars continued to be produced but for the most part quantities and purchasers are unknown. Production can be confirmed for freight cars built for the CPR, the Canadian Copper Company, the Esquimalt & Nanaimo Railway, the Intercolonial Railway and the Manitoba & South Eastern Railway.

Perhaps to compensate for the lack of volume from standard railway companies, a number of street cars were constructed for electric radial lines which were under construction in a number of Canadian cities during the 1890s. This aspect of the company was never large but about five dozen cars were built for several companies including the Toronto Railway

⁸ *Cobourg Saturday Morning Post*, excerpted from "In Memoriam", Crossen Family Collection

⁹ *Toronto Globe*, excerpted from "In Memoriam". Crossen Family Collection

Company, the Montreal and Park Island Railway, the Hamilton Radial Electric Railway and the Niagara, St. Catharines and Toronto Electric Railway.

During this decade, a unique Crossen venture in car manufacturing occurred. In 1893 and again in 1898, the company undertook an export contract. During the summer months in both years, the company sent some of its workmen to Newfoundland to construct both freight and passenger cars for various railways there. Since Newfoundland was not a province of Canada then, this production is the only confirmed export building that the Crossen companies executed.

The first few years of the twentieth century were apparently not very productive although this is difficult to determine due to the lack of resource information. Freight cars were produced for the Canadian Northern Railway but other freight car production is not known. Small passenger car orders were completed for the Northern Pacific & Manitoba Railway and the Quebec & Lake St. John Railway.

In 1903, a new purchaser of both freight and passenger rolling stock placed its first order with the Crossen Company. The Canadian Northern Railway (CNoR) ordered six second class coaches and five mail and express cars as well as a number of freight cars. The following year yet another new railway ordered seven passenger coaches, the Temiskaming & Northern Ontario Railway. The Central Ontario Railway received two additional coaches that year. In 1905, thirty-three passenger cars were erected marking the return to previous production numbers. Also erected the same year were hundreds of freight cars, including a quantity of vans for the CNoR, as well as other freight car types for the ICR, T&NOR and James Bay Railway. The first parlour-observation cars ever used in revenue service were built in 1906 for the Intercolonial Railway and these were named *Aberdeen*, *Dufferin*, *Grey*, *Lorne* and *Minto*. Official cars had been built earlier with open observation platforms but these cars were the first such cars to be used in scheduled revenue passenger service.

Although small orders for other railway companies continued to be constructed, by 1907 the Crossen Car Manufacturing Company had virtually become an in-house rolling stock builder for the Canadian Northern Railway. In this role the company constructed a variety of passenger car types including an official car, *Athabasca*, for the CNoR. In 1910 six parlour cars of the wooden, arch-window, configuration were produced and these were the archetypical cars of the era at their highest development. These six cars, all named, continued in service into the 1950s although in various configurations. Hundreds of vans, flat cars and box cars continued to be constructed, again primarily for the CNoR. Two new cars, stock cars and refrigerator cars, were constructed by the dozens for the first time by Crossen during this first decade of the twentieth century.

By 1910 profound transformations were occurring within the railway rolling stock industry in Canada. Several small car manufacturers existed in various parts of the country. Under the aegis of Max Aitken (later Lord Beaverbrook) and Nathaniel Curry, several of these

smaller, independent rolling stock companies were amalgamated in 1909 to form Canadian Car & Foundry Co. Ltd., headquartered in Montreal. Coincident with this union was the use of steel as a major component in the construction of railway cars. These far reaching changes compelled William Crossen to analyze the corporate future of the Crossen Car Manufacturing Company.

Three options appear to have existed. The Company could continue to manufacture wooden cars for a limited period of time but would face inevitable extinction as steel became more common in the fabrication of railway cars. The Company could incur substantial capital costs for new equipment to manufacture steel cars at a time when there were fewer competitors but those that existed had access to larger sources of capital. The Company could entertain a proposition to amalgamate or merge with another smaller company or become part of a larger enterprise.

In preparation for a change William Crossen, in 1910, reorganized the company as the Crossen Car Company Limited, a company with a Dominion Charter to operate anywhere in Canada in a wide variety of business pursuits. While officially a public company with shares, all but a handful of the shares were owned by Crossen and his siblings. A new official of this public company was V.M. Drury, of Montreal who was also legal counsel to Max Aitken and other officials of the Canadian Car & Foundry Company (CC&FCo). A succinct one line sentence in the *Cobourg World* of November 18, 1910 stated that a syndicate composed of William Mackenzie, W.M. Aitken and Lazard Freres had purchased the Crossen Car Works at Cobourg. Max Aitken was one of the principals in the Canadian Car & Foundry, William Mackenzie was one of the two founders of the Canadian Northern Railway. Lazard Freres was an international investment bank with financial links to both CC&F and CNoR. The enterprise at Cobourg continued to operate with William Crossen as president but for the rest of its existence it completed orders only for the Canadian Northern Railway.

Why the triumvirate purchased the Crossen firm is unknown. Perhaps the new officials believed that they could control prices in the waning wooden railway car construction business. Perhaps the CNoR sought to ensure a supply of durable, inexpensive wooden cars during its expansion towards a transcontinental railway. Perhaps the CC&FCo believed that the purchase and control of the Crossen Company would assure the former company of future financial success. If William Crossen or the others publicly or privately declared their reasons the author has been unable to discover any documentation which reveals the motive for the purchase.

In 1914, national and international events influenced the fortunes and future of the Crossen Car Company. Nationally, Crossen's only customer by this time, the Canadian Northern Railway, was mired in a financial morass which ultimately led to its bankruptcy. Internationally, Europe engaged itself in the First World War which constrained British speculative capital from assisting in the development and construction of Canadian railways. The final wood-sheathed passenger cars constructed at the Crossen site had steel underframes provided by CC&FCo. These seven colonist and five baggage cars for the CNoR were constructed during the first few months of 1915. In June, two box cars were the final assembled

cars to leave the Crossen Car Company Limited. The Company ceased operations and closed its doors forever.

William Crossen retired to enjoy the rest of his life. He continued to live in the house his father had constructed for him at the time of his marriage and which he had renovated in 1910. The house is situated to this day on the south west corner of George and Alice Street. On the north side of Alice Street is the large residence constructed by his father in 1872. From his home Crossen entertained in grand style and participated in many local and provincial organizations. He was generous but stern. He especially enjoyed carriage horses, fishing and expensive cigars.

After a decade of retirement, William James Crossen died in Toronto, age 70, January 15, 1927. At the time he had rented the residence of Donald Mann, the second of the two principal organizers of the Canadian Northern Railway. His estate was valued at \$847,092.57 primarily invested in various stocks and bonds.

After standing idle for two years, all the wooden buildings and most of the brick buildings of the Crossen Car Company were torn down. Several of the brick buildings were sold to Dominion Wheel & Foundry. These were destroyed in a 1947 fire but new facilities were quickly constructed. In 1920, the Langalow-Fowler Furniture Company of Rochester bought the land and the last of the Crossen structures, the house-like edifice which served as the Crossen offices. The furniture company erected its own brick structure. A few years later it was acquired by a leather dying company who operated on the site until the late 1970s. Today the site is owned by an absentee landlord and the property is secured due to environmental contamination from the leather industry.

Currently, only one Crossen constructed car remains in revenue passenger service today. The car is #104 of the Prairie Dog Central Railway (PDC) and is part of that tourist railway's summer operation to the north of Winnipeg, MB. The car was built in Cobourg in August 1906 as Canadian Northern Railway's First Class Coach #142. In 1919, it was renumbered to #8002. With the formation of the Canadian National Railways the car was again renumbered, this time to #3402. In August 1954, it was sold to the Greater Winnipeg Water District Railway as their #52 and later renumbered to #352. In 1970 the Vintage Railway Society of Winnipeg purchased the coach for use on the Prairie Dog Central as car #104. Early in the 1980s the car underwent an extensive restoration and today is one of several prized pieces of equipment in the PDC.

Today little remains in Cobourg to indicate that here was once Canada's largest independent manufacturer of wooden railway passenger and freight rolling stock. The two Crossen family residences still stand occupied by new families. Most Cobourg residents, as they pass these two homes on George Street, are unaware of the history of the two men who built these grand residences. Most passers-by of the dilapidated industry are unaware of the father and son who on this site created and sustained a local industry that once was recognized throughout Canada for the quality of the wooden freight and passenger cars manufactured in Cobourg.

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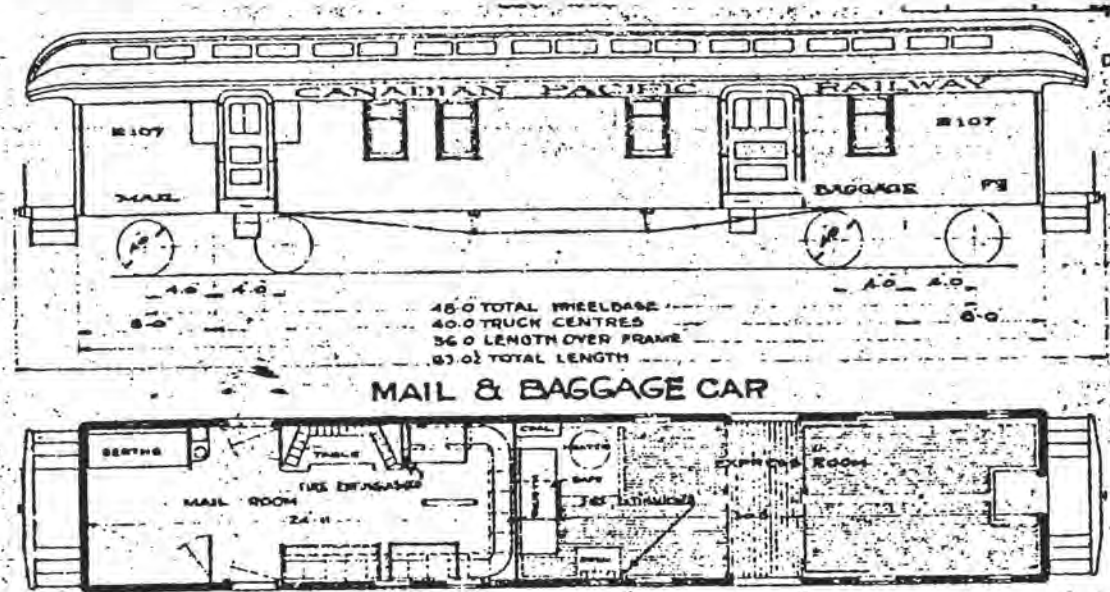
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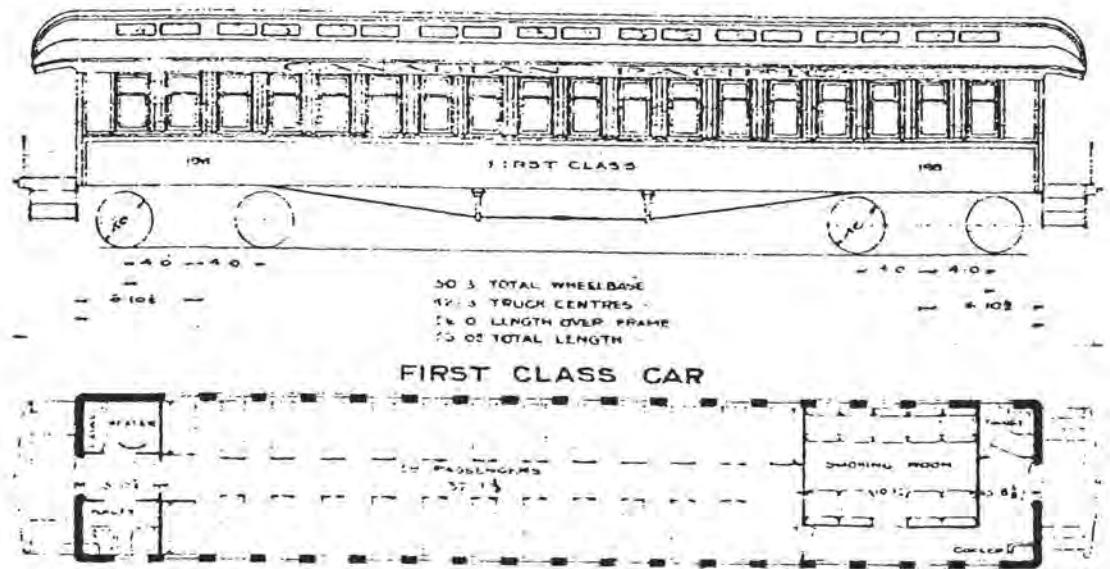
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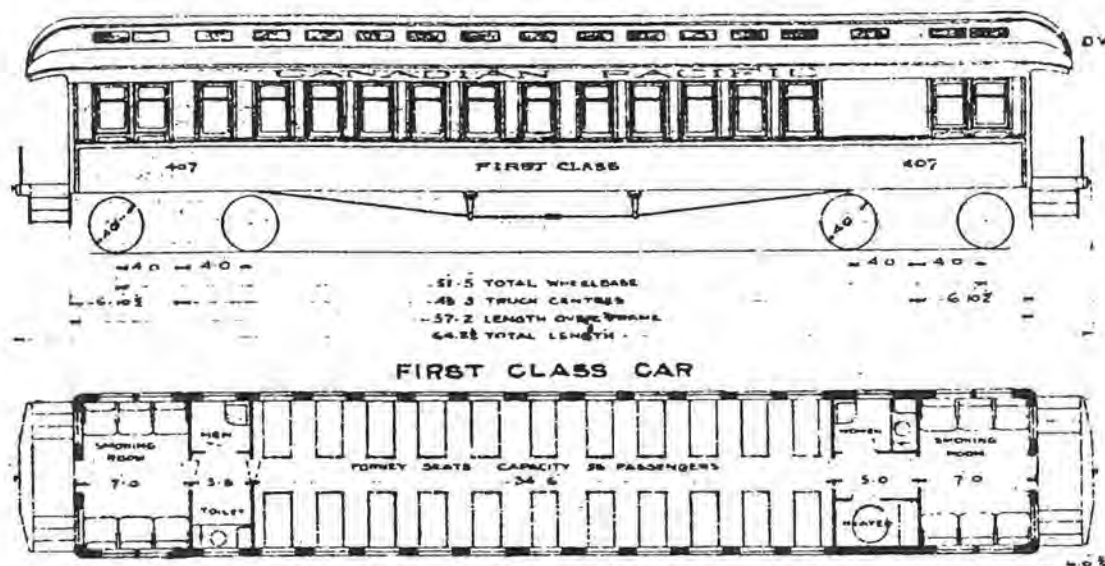


The above mail & baggage car was built in September, 1888 as CPR mail & express car #395, and was one of a series #379-405. It was renumbered #2028 in 1893 and became mail baggage car #2119 in May 1902. In June 1907 it became #1903 and then #3432 in November 1910. Eventually it was put in work service as #407997 and was scrapped in 1936. Mail on rails was an assured means of service delivery in the late 19th and early 20th century and mail contracts were highly sought after by railway companies. In the mail compartment note the berth for sleeping, the sorting table with its pigeon holes, and the along the dividing wall and on the opposite wall are racks to hold mail bags. Since mail sorting was a secure activity, there is no passage between the mail and baggage/express areas.

Both folio drawings courtesy Canadian Pacific Ltd., Collection of George A. Moore

First Class car (coach) left the Crossen shops for the CPR as their #196 in August 1888, part of an order for ten cars. Often the only difference between first and second class was the plushness of the seats. In deference to the travelling ladies, a separate compartment for smoking for men was found in most cars of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. The open vestibule on either end meant that most passengers did not wander from car to car. Separate washrooms were at either end for each gender.

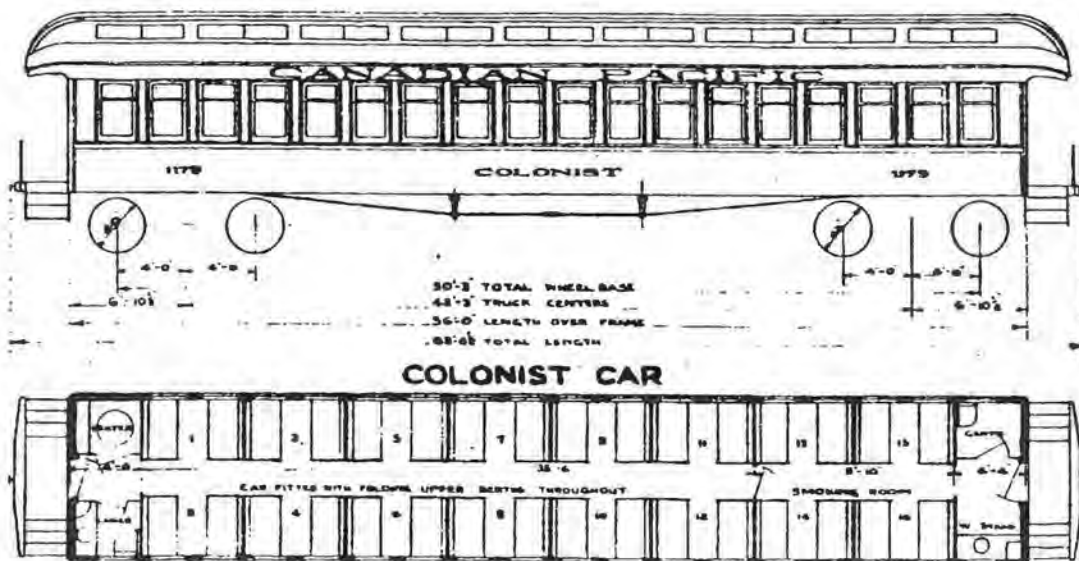


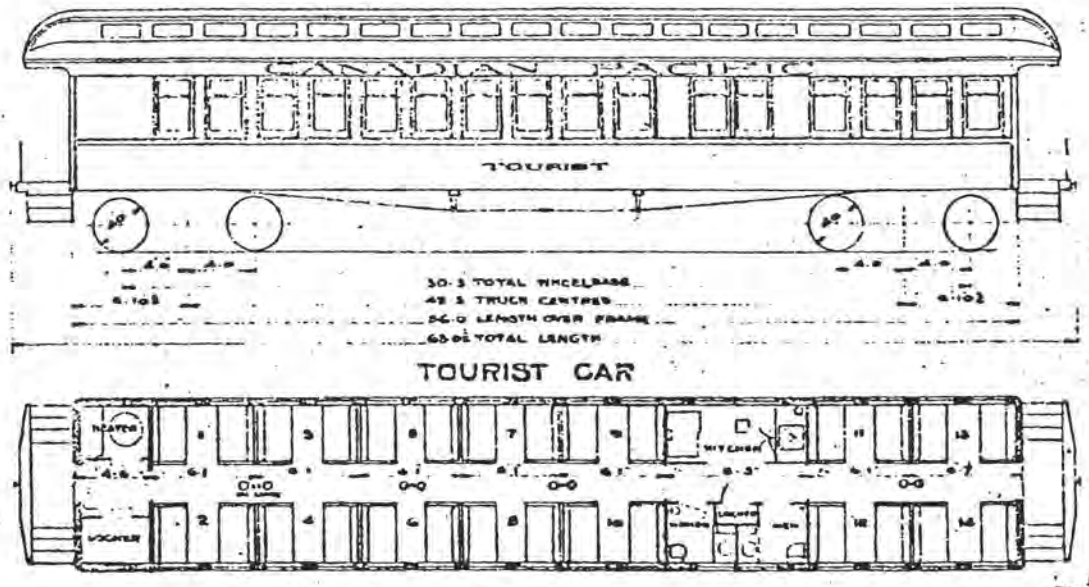


The interiors of first class cars held a variety of configurations depending upon the particular railway company which ordered the car and sometimes individual companies ordered different configurations depending upon the type of service offered on a particular line. In the above car, two smoking areas were provided for patrons at either end of the car. A heater, generally insufficient to ward off winter's chill, was in this arrangement closer to the center of the car. The exterior finish was cherry while the interior was finished in oak. CPR #407 was part of an order of 5 cars built late in 1889. It was renumbered twice before being reconfigured as baggage/smoking car #3158 in June 1916. It was scrapped in 1938.

Both folio drawings courtesy Canadian Pacific Ltd., Collection of George A. Moore

Many passengers carried by Canada's railways at the turn of the twentieth century travelled colonist class, not first class. Canadian manufacturers such as Crossen built scores of these kinds of cars for the Canadian Pacific, Canadian Northern and other railways. These cars provided a basic service with no luxurious appointments. Seats most often were slats of wood with no padding of any kind. A smoking section was included and all cars were fitted with fold down upper berths. This was cheap railway conveyance and many immigrants to Canada travelled to the prairies to their unseen homesteads. The car below was part of a series of 10 cars built in 1889 for the CPR.

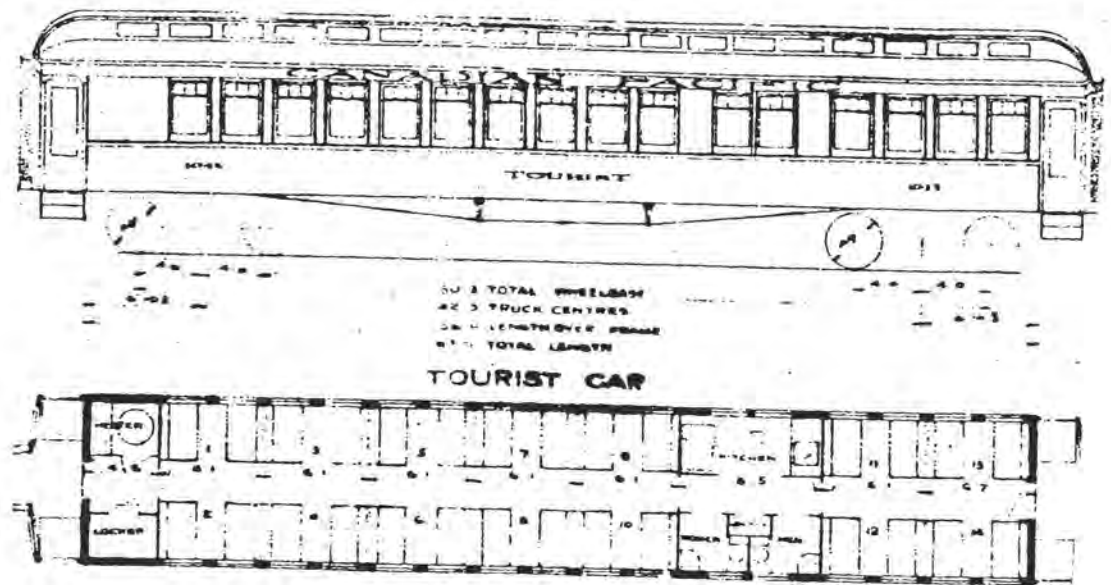




The CPR tourist car was a significantly more refined car than a colonist car of the same era. It was not first class luxury sleeping in a compartment, but reflected a market niche for those who wanted to travel but would not be considered wealthy. A kitchen was provided for patrons to use, the railway supplying the essential utensils, but the passenger providing all the food necessities. Eighteen of these cars were erected by Crossen early in 1893 in time for the summer traffic.

Both folio drawings courtesy Canadian Pacific Ltd., Collection of George A. Moore

Five years later a major change in the tourist class car, as in other car types, was the incorporation of a closed vestibule. The enclosed vestibule allowed passengers to travel between cars in relative safety and with less exposure to the weather. Facilities within the car remained relatively unchanged save for the actual floor plan arrangement. Cherry wood, with upwards of six coats of varnish, was used on the exterior while the interior of tourist class cars were often finished with birch. The tri window transom became a CPR 'brand' mark as they were the only railway in North America to create this feature on all their wooden passenger cars.



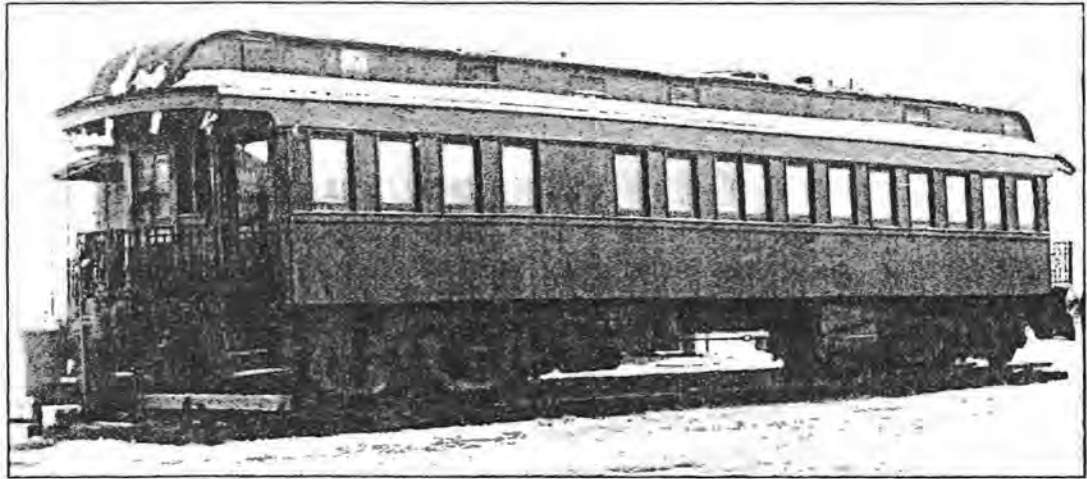


Photo courtesy George A. Moore

On display at Forte La Reine Museum in Portage la Prairie, Manitoba, this Crossen car survives from its built date of August 1882. It's heritage is unusual in that Crossen constructed it from 2 car previously owned by the St. Lawrence & Ottawa Ry. The latter became part of the new Canadian Pacific Railway early in 1882 and William Cornelius Van Horne used this car as his official car when visiting western Canada during the construction phase of the CPR. When Van Horne received a new car in 1885, this car was renumbered #77 and was used by the superintendent of the western district. Later it was renumbered #15, and wore the names Lillooet and Alberta at various times. It was sold in 1956 to a private individual for use as a hunting lodge. Rediscovered in 1976 its heritage was noted and it was then moved to the Fort La Reine Museum.

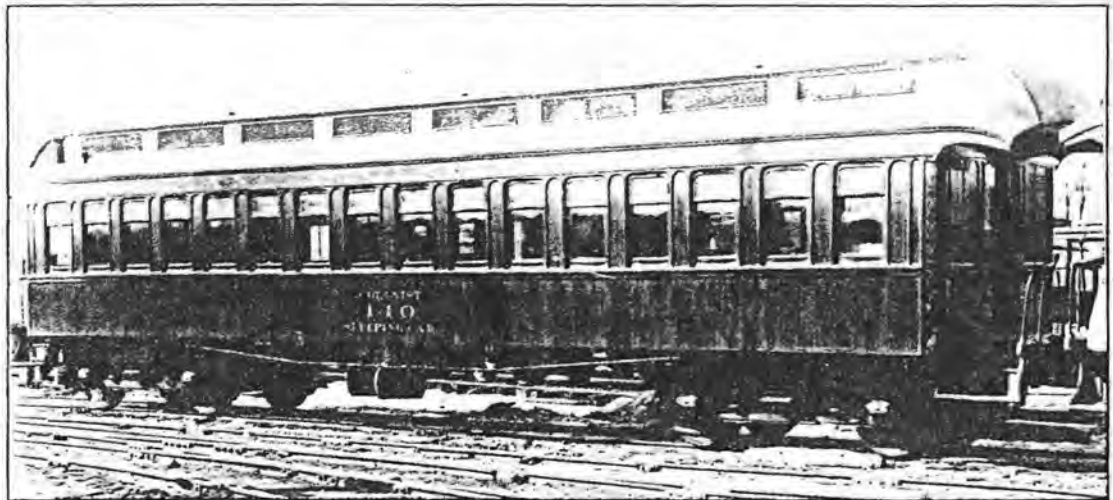


Photo courtesy Wayne Crossen

CPR sleeping car #140 was built as a colonist car in 1884. Its interior was modified for use as a sleeping car later. This car externally is typical of wooden passenger cars constructed until the late 1890s. The car rode on four wheel trucks and the body was held taught by truss rods beneath the car. The exterior sheathing was v-grooved wood such as cherry, whitewood or mahogany. The windows and window separations were capped with a Romanesque arch. The upper sash was fixed, but the lower pane could be raised in the summer. Above the windows the letter board heralded the Canadian Pacific Railway. The roof is a typical clerestory design with vents which could be opened for air flow. The roof ends form a drooping overhang as a modicum of protection from the weather. The end steps were part of the open platform or vestibule. Walking from car to car was somewhat adventuresome given the swaying and lurching of such cars. This car ended its days as a work service car and was scrapped in Winnipeg in December 1933.

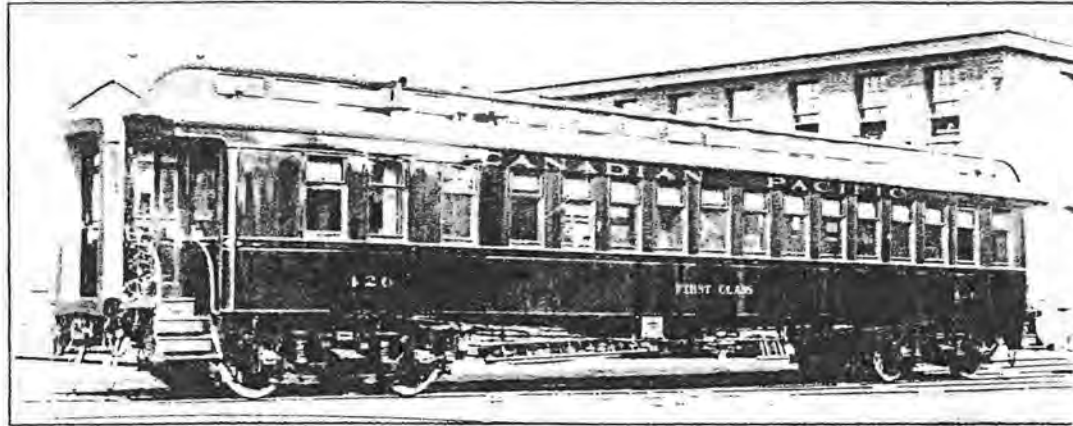


Photo courtesy Brian West; Coo/West Collection

For a brief period from about 1890 to about 1896 many North American railways either built or ordered cars with narrow enclosed vestibules. CPR car #426 is an example of Crossen's design of a narrow vestibule built in the summer of 1890. The vestibule was 'narrow' in that it did not extend to either side. Three doors were involved in this confined space: one from the car itself, the other two to either side. The design was an attempt to limit the effects of weather on passengers travelling between cars. The door confusion however soon led to a full or wide vestibule, eliminating the narrow aspects of door opening and closing. An unusual feature of an 1890s 'modern' car was the use of paper wheels to deaden the vibration and sound of the cars wheels on the rails. Laminated paper discs were attached to steel hubs and tires and for more than a quarter century the most luxurious passenger cars rode on such wheels.

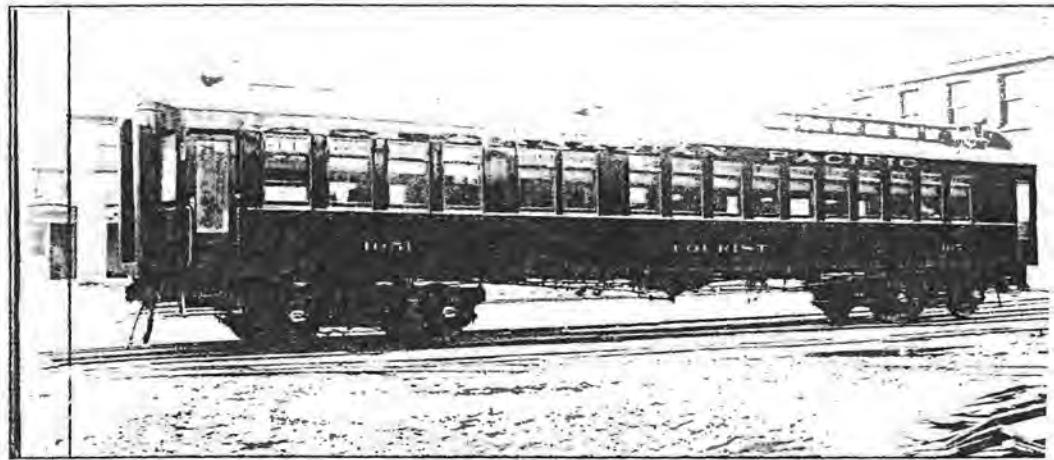
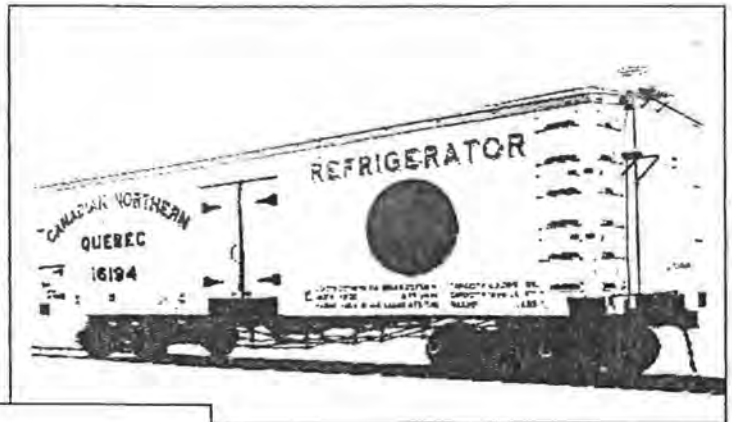


Photo courtesy Brian West; Coo/West Collection

Built in 1898 car #1051 illustrates a closed wide vestibule car, completing the transition from open to wide vestibule during the decade. A hallmark feature of the new vestibule design was the full pane of glass door. On each side of the passage way is a glass window. This allowed a passenger to stand in the end of the vestibule and observe the rear of the train if the car was the last in the train. The Canadian Pacific sought to create a unique image for its passenger service and this can be noted in the three pane, beveled glass, transom windows. Note also that the word Railway has been deleted from the letter board. The roof ventilated the cooking surface in the car's compact kitchen. This car as well rode on paper wheels. The car was wrecked in an accident near MacLeod, Alberta in 1907.

The Crossen Companies, unlike their competitors, did not take builder's photos of their products. These two images are rare as they depict two cars either on the Crossen property or shortly after they were put into service. The Canadian Northern Quebec car is owned by that subsidiary of the Canadian Northern Railway chartered to operate in that province. There was also a similarly organized Canadian Northern Ontario Railway company. Car 16272 is owned by the parent Canadian Northern Railway.

Both photos National Archives of Canada; Merrilees

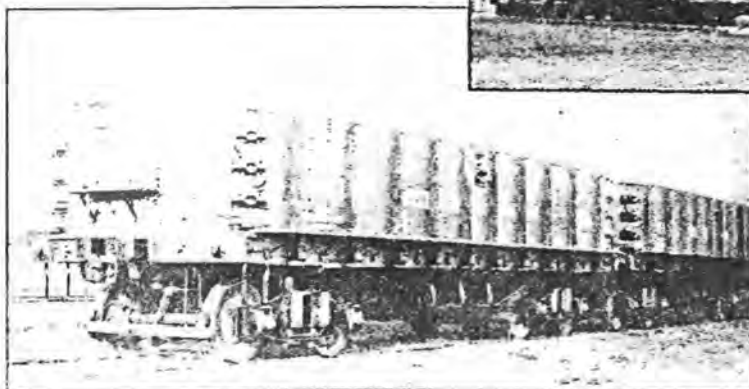


Collection. Above: PA 200106; left PA202214

The Crossen identification on 16194 is to the left of the door at the bottom. On 16272 it is to the right of the small door on the left end of the car. The small door on both cars allows access to a charcoal heater which was used to prevent some foods from freezing while in winter transit. The date of construction of these cars is not known

Both photos National Archives of Canada; Merrilees Collection
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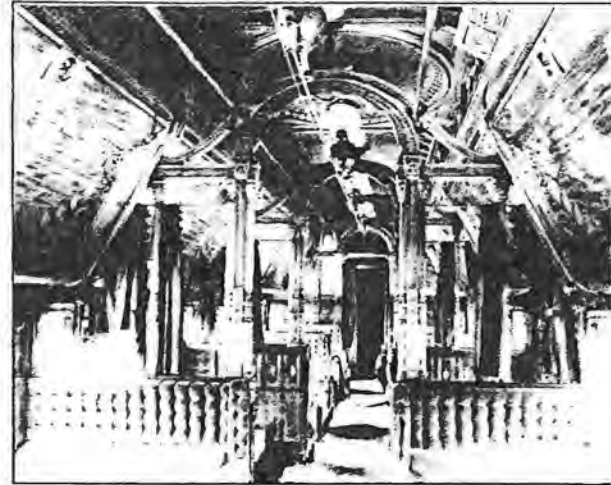
An unidentified Canadian Northern locomotive at an unidentified location heads a freight train early in the twentieth century. The second car, double-sheathed box car CNR 2602 is a Crossen car, although the date of its manufacture is unknown. The identifying logo is to the far left bottom corner of the freight car.



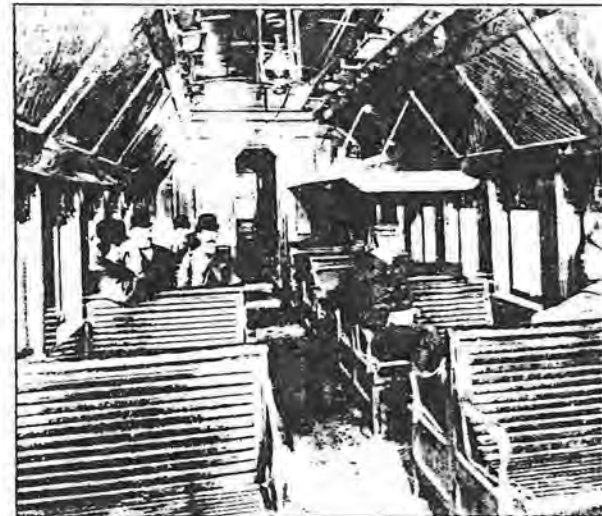
Esquimalt & Nanaimo hopper car 442 was part of an 1898 order for ten cars. Sister car 441 is coupled behind. The wooden beam in front of the first set of wheels forms part of the brake assembly.

The photographs on these pages cannot be authenticated as the interior of Crossen cars. Nonetheless they do illustrate the incredible craftsmanship in wood displayed by Crossen artisans and carpenters.

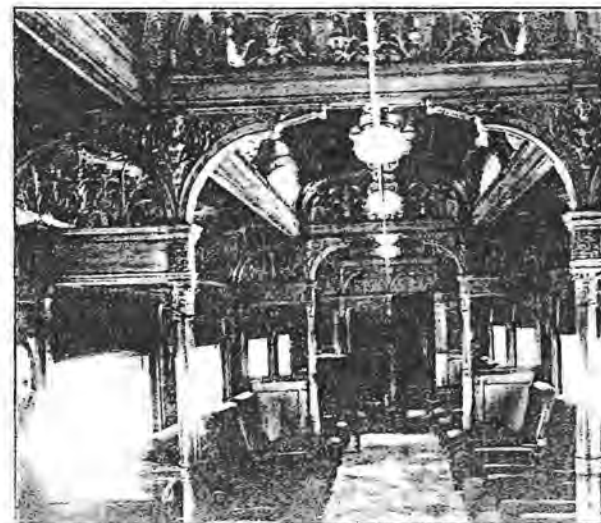
The car in the top is a first class sleeping car. Note the incredible detail in the hand carved woodworking and the plush seats. The upper berth pulls down and a partition separates the head and foot of both upper and lower berths from the next compartment.



Contrast this typical colonist car accommodations for sleeping purposes with that of the above. Wood abounds here as well, but it is not complemented with intricate detail and plush seating. No dividers separate compartments at night. The number of gas lamps in this car is also far fewer than in the first class car above.



The parlour car was the height of Victorian and Edwardian luxury. Artistry in wood sculpture reached its zenith in the elaborate carvings and curves that separated the various lounging compartments. Leather adorns the oversized chairs enhancing the visual stimulus of luxurious surroundings. The hand craftsmanship illustrated in these photographs is not repeated in any contemporary mode of transportation.



WHO WAS THE FIRST SETTLER IN HOPE TOWNSHIP?

by
Sharon Murphy
Timelines Genealogical Research

Who was *the* first settler in Hope Township?

In the year 1793, four Loyalist families arrived at the mouth of what is now the Ganaraska River. They were greeted by a band of Mississauga Indians from the nearby village of Cochingomink. These four families, comprising 27 souls, were the first white settlers in the Township of Hope.¹ In 2003 a committee was formed in the Municipality of Port Hope, County of Northumberland, Province of Ontario, Canada, to celebrate the “first landing and founding” of Port Hope. The question of who qualified as *the first* settler was asked and the existing history was discussed prior to and during these celebrations.

The Goal

As the facts were examined it suggested that there might very well have been a white settler already living in Hope Township in 1793, prior to the arrival of these Loyalist families. Was this settler, known as William Holmes Peck, the *first* settler in Hope Township?

The Background

The settlement of Hope Township was the result of the settlement efforts of three men, namely Elias Smith, Abraham Walton and Jonathan Walton. They had made an agreement with the government of the day that included bringing in 40 settlers to Hope Township and organizing and completing this settlement, for which the proprietors/patentees were to receive Hope Township. The re-enactment of the settlers' arrival in Hope Township was to include the *first* four families. For the purposes of the re-enactment these *first* families were Harris, Johnson, Stevens and Ashford. The hired man, Haskill, was also included.

During the “210 Landing” celebrations, I had the pleasure of meeting with Ross Pake² from California. He had just taken part in the re-enactment of the 1793 Landing in Hope Township. Ross was dressed as a Fur Trader for his role and enjoyed the experience immensely. He had been working on his family genealogy for several years and took great pride in being a descendant of one of the first settlers. Unfortunately, his work had not been examined in time to authenticate his link as either one of the first settlers or the first settler prior to the date of the celebration and therefore his connection was not recognized as he had hoped.

¹ Reeves, Harold. *The History of the Township of Hope*, 2nd ed. Foreword, The Cobourg Sentinel-Star, Cobourg, Ontario, 1992

² Pake, Ross. Descendant of William Holmes Peck/Peak/Peck, permission to publish article.

Ross had been working on this particular branch of the family with the help of Leslie Wilson³, for many years, and her untiring efforts have established the background that provided a basis to review and affirm the following statements. In order to verify and substantiate the original historical documents, Ross contracted my services. I have been examining the work done and verifying as much as possible with original records. My work included not only verifying what Ross and Leslie had already gathered, but extended to researching any other possible data that had not, as yet, been found and examined. Was William Holmes Peeck the first settler in Hope Township and if not, when did he arrive and how does that fit with the other “Founding Families” and their arrival? Up until now, the original written documentation, along with publications, books and theories that had been gathered and studied regarding the first settlers of Hope Township definitely placed William Holmes Peeck in Hope Township, Northumberland County, District of Newcastle in 1796.

The Discovery

On 2nd August 1794⁴ a letter was composed by Jonathon Walton, one of the proprietors/patentees, to the Surveyor General that promised the broken front of lot Number 37 in the Township of Hope to William Holmes Peeck, provided it was “free of any expenses to Jonathon Walton, Abraham Walton and Elias Smith Sr.” and signed by Jonathon Walton for himself and the others.

A copy of this correspondence was eventually entered into the Surveyor General’s Letters Received copybook. The lot number was 37 and not 27 as is shown on all other documentation regarding William Holmes Peeck. I believe this to be simply a transcription error as there was no lot 37⁵ and has never been.

This was August of 1794, just slightly over a year since the first settler landed in Port Hope in June of 1793. By now William Holmes Peeck has approached the proprietors/patentees of Hope Township for their permission and approval, they have obviously taken time to discuss it amongst themselves, and their decision has been given in writing. They knew that their approval would be necessary for any settlers wanting land within the Hope Township boundary. They would also be aware that William Holmes Peeck had been present and was familiar with and living on the particular piece of property he requested from them. As their main goal was to install newcomers to settle the area it was in their best interests to oblige – especially when it was going to cost them nothing.

A survey map was signed by D. W. Smith dated 1793. This date is approximate as there

³ Leslie Wilson is a freelance research and historian, born and raised in Durham County, Ontario, specializing in the history of families of the Newcastle & Home Districts of Upper Canada. She was employed by Ross Pake to research and compile data on William Holmes Peeck.

⁴ Archives of Ontario Crown Land Records, Letters Received (Copies) by the Surveyor General, October 1797 – June 1798 Original Volume 7, Record Group 1, Series A-I-1, Volume 55, page 164; MS626, Reel 3

⁵ Ministry of Natural Resources, Crown Land Survey Records, Hope Township Survey, D.W. Smith c1793.

is no date shown on the map. However, it was the first patent map created, according to the Ministry of Natural Resources, who are responsible for and manage these maps and surveys. It contains the names of the original proprietors/patentees and their friends and families. Abraham Iredell, Surveyor, inserted these particular names on the map according to Elias Smith's correspondence.⁶

As time passed and the settlers completed their settlement duties, a request dated 3rd July 1797 to update this map, was made by Elias Smith.⁷ One of the updates his request included was in regards to lot 27, first concession and it asked to change the name from Jonathan Walton to William Peek. William Peek received his Patent 22 May 1798,⁸ and yet his name was already on the list of settlers on the property in 1797. The fact that there was some confusion over the permission from the three proprietors/patentees regarding their signatures on the appropriate paperwork, would explain the delay in processing the documentation and thereby delaying the dates at every step.

If we refer back to the 1794 document⁹ that gave permission to William Peeck to settle on lot 37, first concession, Hope Township we can see that this particular copy of the document was not actually entered into the letter copybooks until a much later date. Was the original letter misplaced or simply not copied at the time of its creation? Did William Holmes Peeck actually show up with his copy to prove his position? At that point perhaps it was discovered that it had not been entered when it was originally created. We will never know positively why there was a late entry of this letter, but the fact that it has been located does clear up the situation between William Holmes Peeck and the other settlers. It explains why his property documentation was issued quite separately from the other families, and it opens the door to the concept that he was indeed there very close to the time that the settlers arrived.

The document dated, 11 July 1796¹⁰ confirming that William Peeck was the settler for lot Number 27, in the first concession of Hope, and actually entered into the Fiats and Warrant Book the 19th April 1798, stipulated and was dependent upon William Holmes Peeck providing proof that he did have permission to petition for this particular piece of land. The copy was made after that sitting of Council. Although the document was dated 11 July 1796 it was not entered until after the April 1798 council meeting.

⁶ Archives of Ontario Crown Land Records, Letters Received (Copies) by the Surveyor General, October 1797 – June 1798 Original Volume 7, Record Group 1, Series A-I-1, Volume 55, pages 178 Elias Smith; MS626, Reel 3

⁷ Archives of Ontario Crown Land Records, Letters Received (Copies) by the Surveyor General, October 1797 – June 1798 Original Volume 7, Record Group 1, Series A-I-1, Volume 55, pages 178-181 Elias Smith; MS626, Reel 3

⁸ Ministry of Natural Resources, Crown Lands Surveys Department, Patent WR 2633.

⁹ Archives of Ontario Crown Land Records, Letters Received (Copies) by the Surveyor General, October 1797- June 1798 Original Volume 7, Record Group 1, Series A-I-1, Volume 55, page 164; MS626 Reel 3

¹⁰ Archives of Ontario, Crown Lands, Upper Canada Land Books, Volume C, 11th April 1797 – 19th January 1802, page 109; C101

Sometime prior to 2nd August 1794 William Holmes Peeck must have been living in the area, and likely already on lot 27 as he specifically asked for this location,¹¹ in order to instigate the paperwork leading up to the 1794 documentation. The assumption that it would take a year or two to have any official documentation prepared and approved seems like an understatement.

Published Versions

There are two different versions, according to Harold Reeves,¹² of when and how the other first settlers arrived in June of 1793. Reeves states that, according to Dodd's Directory¹³ the first settlers arrived in two separate groups. The first group of families were those of James Stevens and Nathaniel Ashford. The second set of families to arrive were the Myndert Harris and Lawrence Johnson families plus a party of engineers planning to survey the township. In any case, there is no mention of William Holmes Peeck being a passenger at that time.

The other version written by the "Old Timer" from the *Guide*¹⁴ of 1870 indicates that the Ashford, Stevens, Harris and Johnson families all arrived at the same time in the same boat. According to Reeves' book, "There was a conflict regarding who were the first settlers to arrive but agreement that Almus¹⁵ Peck and Jesse Trull¹⁶, who both settled on the Lake Shore Road, were the last to arrive that year, making six families and a total of thirty-six persons." There is no proof, other than hearsay, to back-up this statement. It is also noted "Stevens settled on lot 2, concession 2; Johnson on lot 1, concession 2; Ashford on lot 1, concession 1; Harris, lot 3, concession 1." All of these lots were at the east end of Hope Township, whereas the property that William Holmes Peeck settled on was at least 24 lots west of these early settlers. Could it be possible that Peeck was already on his lot 27 at the time of the landing? How would anyone know?

The Analysis

In researching the first settlers of Hope Township I have reviewed the dates and locations of the lots settled and have found no original documented evidence that any other settler actually received any land in Hope township prior to 1796, with the exception of the 1794 documentation discussed for William Peeck.

The first piece of documented evidence was created on the 2nd August 1794, this being

¹¹ This particular location had a creek and access to the lake for transportation and would have been a logical place to settle.

¹²Reeves, Harold. *The History of the Township of Hope*, 2nd ed. Page 37, The Cobourg Sentinel-Star, Cobourg, Ontario, 1992.

¹³Dodds, E.E. *Dodd's Directory 1880. The Directory and Book of Reference for the West Riding of the County of Northumberland and the County of Durham etc.*

¹⁴ *Port Hope Guide*, 1836 – 1967, "Old Timer" Myndert Harris, columnist

¹⁵ This is William Holmes Peeck-I believe the hand writing was mistaken for Almus, and Peck/Peeck

¹⁶ Do not know which Trull this is.

the date on the copy of the letter sent to the Surveyor General's Office giving permission for land for lot 37 in the first concession of Hope Township (there is/was no lot 37 on the survey, lots ended at 35) to be settled by William Holmes Peeck as discussed at the beginning of this paper. There has been no other documentation found regarding any of the above-mentioned families that precede the 1794 date.

The next date, 9th April 1796 is on the petition¹⁷ made by William Peeck and signed in York asking for 260 acres in Hope Township, Broken front, lot 27 on the first concession as the settlement requirements have been met. "The Petition of W^m Peeck Stating that he has built a house and made great Improvements on lot No27, Township of Hope, with the broken fronts". This document also states that he has taken the "Oathes".

The mere amount of time it would take to simply clear a little land and build a cabin to shelter a family, plus hunt to provide sustenance, would be enormous. Therefore, if it only took one year to clear enough land to plant a garden and some crops, it would not be out of the question that in order to have cleared 30 acres by 1798, the land could have been inhabited as early as six years earlier. In order to fulfil the settlement obligation, according to the Orders in Council relating to the Sale of Lands in Upper Canada, generally the settler had to prove that he had "cleared and cropped five acres, and cleared half the road in front of his land, having erected and inhabited a house thereon for one year he will be entitled to receive a grant to him and his heirs, "including a road allowance to be maintained." This was to be done during the first year of settlement.

The petition of 9th April 1796 was read before council on 11th July 1796, whereby Peeck petitioned for lot 27 first concession, Hope Township, settlement duties fulfilled. At this time the Council¹⁸ ordered that "a Certificate must be provided from the persons for whose associates the Township of Hope was appropriated that the Petitioner had their approbation before he can be confirmed." In other words, Peeck needed permission from the three proprietors to petition for that particular piece of land.

William Peeck now had to produce either the 1794 document or a copy of it or get the official permission again. The following year, the 28th June 1797, he petitioned again and he must have been successful because he was "Recommended for confirmation in lot Number 27 in the first concession of Hope".¹⁹ On the 3rd July 1797 it was confirmed in council and signed by Peter Russell, Receiver General of Public Accounts.

Although only two of the three proprietors/patentees have signed the document giving

¹⁷ Archive of Ontario, Upper Canada Land Petitions "P" Bundle 2, 1796-1797, RG1, L3, Vol. 400, page 64; C 2489.

¹⁸ Archives of Ontario, Upper Canada Land Book Volume B, 1st October 1796 to 7 April 1797, page 77; C101.

¹⁹ Archives of Ontario, Upper Canada Land Book Volume C, 11th April 1797 to 19th January 1802, page 109; C101

given to Reeves²⁴ for his book, William Peeck was a man at the time and a full participant in the event.

The Ontario Land Record Index shows a John Trull as receiving an Order-in-Council dated 8 Oct 1796 for lot 14 First concession; Nathaniel Ashford receives an Order-in-Council 22 June 1797 for N1/2 lot 23 11 concession; Myndert Harris receives an Order-in-Council 23 June 1797; and James Stevens and Laurence Johnson do not have a record of any transactions before 1801 and then it was for Stevens only.

The dates the families were shown as being present, in the letter sent from Elias Smith to the Surveyor General, D.W. Smith dated 3rd July 1797, indicated that they were all in Hope Township at that time. The fact is that the earliest document was dated 1794 and was that of William Holmes Peeck.

The families that arrived together or days apart by boat were all under the umbrella of Elias Smith Sr., Jonathan Walton and Abraham Walton and as such their applications and other paperwork were handled as a group effort in most cases. On the other hand, Peeck was applying alone for his land without the benefit (or detriment) of being included in the group of settlers.

What has been determined is that documented evidence of the Crown Deeds²⁵ issued to these families indicates that none were actually issued prior to 1801 with the exception being for 1796 for William Peeck. There has been supposition that only the "connected" people received their patents within any reasonable time period. However, we have no reason to believe that William Peeck was "connected" or that he received special treatment.

The Conclusion

The question of who was the "first settler" in Hope Township is almost impossible to prove, however the conclusion drawn from the research and study that have taken place is this: There is little doubt that William Holmes Peeck was already settled on the location known as lot 27 Broken Front, First concession of Hope Township prior to the arrival of the Harris, Ashford, Stevens and Johnston families. This conclusion is based on his obvious presence in the Township early enough to satisfy the settlement duties according to the 1794 document and his two sworn statements that he was indeed "the first settler in Hope Township".

²⁴ "Reeves, Harold. *The History of the Township of Hope*, 2nd ed. Page 261, The Cobourg Sentinel-Star, Cobourg, Ontario, 1992. "Two months after the arrival of our pioneers, Mr Almus Peck settled on the Rice farm, and Mr. Trull settled on what is now the Brand farm, both being on the Lake Shore Road".

²⁵ Reeves, Harold *The History of the Township of Hope*, 2nd ed. Page 32-37, The Cobourg Sentinel-Star, Cobourg, Ontario, 1992

their permission, the final authorization is received and signed 19th April 1798 – A.W. (A. Walton)²⁰ agreeing to Peeck having lot 27.

The delay in this permission process was due, for the most part, to the fact that this individual lived in the United States and was not readily available to give his signature.

Now that William Peeck had his documentation in order and could pay for the survey he did so on the same day, 19th April 1798 paying for the survey 3322²¹ ordered by council 11 July 1796. While he was there he also paid for his neighbour's survey 3323, Warrant 1622, John Stoner, M.C. a late ranger, for his land that was ordered in council 14 July 1796 and was for 300 acres including former grants. These two were the only orders dated 1796.

Finally, William Peeck had the Patent issued for his land. The Patent document was entered on 22nd May 1798 and registered 6 September 1798. This success seems to have encouraged William Peeck in his ongoing quest for land and on 31st May 1798 he petitioned²² for 400 more acres under the new regulations. He stated he is supporting his Father, wife and three children in that petition which document confirmed the members of his household on that date. The document also stated "That your Petitioner was one of the first settlers in the above named township and has received a order of Survey for lot 27 first concession on which he has about 30 Acres cleared, and has a Dwelling House Barn and other improvements..." William Peeck signed this document by making "his mark" in York.

As time passed, William Peeck moved on to Pickering and continued to reside there for many years. However, in 1837 he petitioned²³ for land due to a dispute over the property that he was leasing and the following excerpt confirms and reinforces the fact that he once again states that he was the first settler of Port Hope. In this petition, William states in first person testimony:

He [WHP] was the first settler below this town [York] on the Don [River]. After clearing up five acres he was told he could not have the land altho [sic] Col. Butler had promised it to him. Your petitioner then became the first settler at Port Hope; and afterwards induced by the then Surveyor General of this country, the Hon. D.W. Smith, he became the first settler in Pickering wherein he has resided between thirty and forty years.

Unlike the Myndert Harris testimony, based on the recollections of an 8 year old boy (1794),

²⁰ Archive of Ontario, Upper Canada Land Petitions "P" Bundle 2, 1796-1797, RG1, L3, Vol. 400, cover of document, page 64: C 2489

²¹ Archives of Ontario, Crown Land Records, Warrants and Surveys, Vol. 014, Page 259: MS693, Reel 20.

²² Upper Canada Land Petitions "P" Bundle Miscellaneous 1797 – 1836, RG1, L3, Vol. 399, page 34; Archives of Ontario, Microfilm #C 2488.

²³ Upper Canada Land Petitions, "P" Bundle 29, 1837 Petition 9; Archives of Ontario Microfilm Reel #C-2732.

**DOING MEDICAL HISTORY FROM BELOW:
POVERTY AND PATIENTS IN EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY LONDON**

by
Kevin Siena

I like to think of myself as an historian of patients. While medical history was for a long time essentially the history of doctors, dominated by biographies of famous men, the move of social historians into the field began to take medical history in new directions. Impressively, historians have begun to stand medical history on its head in several ways. First, some researchers have started to change their perspectives from healthcare providers to healthcare recipients – from doctors to patients. The medical exchange takes two to tango, and the story is not complete if one studies only doctors. Despite the terrific work which has been done to chart the development of doctors, the fact remains that until recently, we lacked any history of patients.

Perspective is everything. If one takes the patient as the point of departure rather than the doctor, a whole host of issues suddenly appears. What is the medical exchange like for those on the receiving end? How did patients view doctors? How did they deal with their own illness before they got to the doctor? What did they do after they left? What did they have to do to get a doctor? (an important question for a growing number of people in Ontario today!) What kind of strategy did people employ when they fell ill? And finally, what did their illness mean to them? By this I mean to ask, how did a person's cultural context – who they were, where they lived, what religion they were, what century it was, whether they are male or female – impact how they interpreted their own illness? These are just some of the kinds of questions that a medical history focusing on the patient can begin to ask.

Some of these questions will probably strike readers as important for today's debates on healthcare, especially those that relate to the question of access. Last year's Rominow report and all the political debates about what kind of healthcare system we should have in Canada revolve a great deal around the issue of access – who can access care, and how can they access care. The thorniest group in those debates is always the poor. In almost every historical context the poor have faced a range of issues surrounding the issue of healthcare access. So a second way that social historians have changed the history of medicine is to follow the lead of other social historians and to do what is called "history from below." In other words, study not the history of elites, but the history of common people and the poor. In this case, how did issues of wealth and poverty affect available medical services? How have earlier societies grappled with the issues of healthcare provision as a component of general social welfare? In a word, what was medicine like for the poor?

Essentially I am born of these two strains in the discipline. I study medicine and poverty, and I try my best to balance a history of healthcare provision with a history of medicine from the patient's perspective. Thus, I study poor patients. I happen to study them in eighteenth-century London (England).

What kinds of medical care was available in early modern London, and what did it look like from the patient's point of view? For starters, there were lots of different kinds of medical practitioners that one might consult when they fell ill. There were three main kinds of practitioners – physicians, surgeons and apothecaries – with basic differences between them. A physician had a university degree and could probably read Latin. He was considered the finest available practitioner and he charged the highest fees. A surgeon by contrast had learned his trade by apprenticeship. He was literate, but likely had little or no university education. By the late eighteenth century he probably took courses at a hospital. Surgeons were only supposed to deal with the physical manipulation of the body; they would do surgery, set bones, and deal with the body topically. However, they were not supposed to proscribe internal medicines, which was the exclusive domain of physicians. Apothecaries were the forerunners of pharmacists. They made up and sold all the medicines that others proscribed.

The problem was that this division of labour was routinely compromised, because no one was able to regulate the medical scene. Very few people were ever charged with malpractice, and so surgeons often – even routinely—prescribed internal medicines, and apothecaries – routinely – diagnosed people and proscribed drugs themselves. Moreover, there were many other healers who technically should not have been allowed to heal, but who did anyway. To the traditional list of physicians, apothecaries, and surgeons, we must also add an unknown but significant number of what we would call 'alternative' healers. Midwives offered a range of medical services beyond birthing babies, usually related to treating women's reproductive health and children's maladies. And a wide range of nondescript 'doctors' can be found advertising their services, despite that they have no connection with bodies like the Royal College of Physicians or the Barber Surgeons Company. These included empirics of all sorts, women specializing in feminine diseases, bone-steers, people who drew teeth, and people who sold nostrums for self-medication. London had a wide medical market place, with lots of different medical options. In fact, there were so many options that patients had a difficult time differentiating one practitioner from the next, because they were overwhelmed with advertising. What are we to make of the 'doctors' like Peter Maris whose late seventeenth-century handbill promised to cure:

Dropsies, Rumatism and Consumptions, Agues, and Feavors, Black and yellow Jaundice, all Fainting Swooning and Convulsions, Cholick, Stone and gravell, Excessive Vomiting, All violent pains and diseases of the Head, rising of vapours, foulness of Stomach ill Digestion and Scurvey. As also all distempers in the Eyes, violent Rhumes, and several sorts of cataracts, which I help in a quarter of an hour & restore sight in a moment... I perfectly cure the *Morbus Gallicus* or *French Pox*... as soon as you perceive [it]. I will prevent the evil from breaking forth, and restore you to perfect health... If anyone lives distant from this place, they need not come up to me, for I can give them such Illustrious medicines and infallible directions, that they may cure themselves... If any person that is ill [will] send their Urine to me, I will satisfy them the nature of their distemper, and give them remedies for the same... If any Woman

be unwilling to speak to me they may have the conveniency of speaking with my Wife, who is expert in all Women's distempers.

My Hours are from eight o'Clock till twelve in the Morning, and from Two in the Afternoon till Eight at Night."

Restore the sight to the blind; cure all diseases known to man, and issue a diagnosis from a glance at a patient's urine, it seems there was nothing he couldn't do!

But all of these medical options all cost money. The fact is that many Londoners could not afford a private doctor, whoever he (or to a limited degree she) might be. Consulting a private physician was essentially a luxury. Those who could not afford their own doctor usually had to rely on a hospital. However, we must keep in mind that seeing a private doctor remained the optimum choice in this period. While today hospitals are largely seen as the pinnacle of the medical scene, where the best possible care can be found, the reverse was true in the eighteenth century. Hospitals were established primarily, indeed exclusively, to care for those who cannot afford medical care in the private market. Even surgery was arranged privately by those who could afford to do so. Everyone knew that early hospitals were not safe. They may have been somewhat cleaner than they have sometimes been described, but the perception at the time remained, and historical records verify, that many people caught infectious diseases when they entered crowded and unhygienic hospitals. Before the era of germ theory and antibiotics, contagious diseases such as small pox or typhus proved could wreak havoc on a crowded hospital ward. People of means avoided them at all costs.

From the middle ages English hospitals had been run by the Catholic church. But after England broke off from Rome in the sixteenth century, it had to find other ways to fund these institutions. They did this in two main ways. The Crown endowed a series of "Royal Hospitals." Henry VIII essentially confiscated former Catholic hospitals, gave them to the city of London and endowed them lots of property so that they could support themselves through rental incomes. Over time, private groups also began to fund their own hospitals in the eighteenth century, which came to be known as "Voluntary Hospitals." In these schemes a group of wealthy and middle class philanthropists pooled their money to found a charitable hospital. All who donated a set amount became 'governors' of the hospital. This allowed them to nominate patients for entry. In these hospitals, patients hoping to get in had to solicit a nomination from one of these men.

Traditional hospital histories have tended to focus on these governors or the medical staffs. But what do these institutions look like if we explore them from the outside in, from the perspective of patients? What did it mean for folks to enter an eighteenth-century hospital? Evidence suggests that people only entered hospitals when they had no other medical options available to them. In other words, they stayed out of the hospital as long as they could. In fact, we can take entrance into the hospital as a sign of relative destitution. There are a number of reasons why eighteenth-century Londoners tried to avoid hospitals,

including the aforementioned danger of catching a worse disease in the hospital than what one already had. But there were other problems as well. For starters, hospitals were disciplinary institutions. They were always governed by rather stringent rules dictating what patients could and could not do while inside. Usually patients could not leave the hospital, so there was a measure of incarceration at work. Patients who left the hospital without permission might be expelled and refused further care. Thus paupers generally lost their freedom of movement when they entered a hospital in the eighteenth century. They could be sure that they would also have to abide by the rules of the house which prohibited smoking, drinking, swearing, gambling, playing at dice or cards. They had to rise and sleep according to the house curfew, and conform to the house diet. They were also obliged to do labor in the house; those who were ambulatory had to help the matron and the nurses with the cooking, cleaning, washing, and tending to the other patients. Refusal to comply was met with expulsion.

This disciplinary regimen was intended for a range of reasons. What we see in this period is that the middle class and wealthy reformers who controlled hospital administrations tried to use these institutions to impose moral reformation on the lower classes, whom they viewed as rowdy, uncontrolled and in need of discipline. Elites saw hospitals as a way of institutionalizing the poor where they could impose a regimen of forced labour, and religious instruction. Patients were expected to attend church and hear prayer services daily. They got a goodly dose of religion, as hospitals sought to 'cure' people's bodies and souls simultaneously. This could take a variety of forms. My own research has concerned patients in the venereal wards most closely. London's St. Thomas's Hospital used public flogging to ritually shame people who contracted syphilis, whipping them in the hospital square before the entire patient population and staff to demonstrate the errors of their ways before they would discharge them. They also made such patients appear before the board of governors to give thanks for the cure, allowing governors the chance to moralize over them.

The public nature of hospital care is also deeply important for thinking about the illness experiences of the poor. If we think about what a paying patient had to do to obtain care, it was all pretty straightforward -- they applied to a physician or surgeon and had that person treat them in their home. It was entirely private. But for patients who needed to get into a hospital, the process was long, tricky, and their care was quite public. For example, anyone in a hospital in this period could expect to be on display for entire classes of medical students. In the eighteenth century medical education moved into hospitals, and despite evidence that patients resisted and resented being used as teaching props, this was a fact of hospital life. Being on display whether one liked it or not had tangible ramifications for issues like medical confidentiality. In this period medical confidentiality was not a right enshrined for all patients, but rather was a service that could be purchased on the medical marketplace. For example, we see doctors' advertisements (especially their ads for VD treatment) promising patient privacy as a special service. While we have today come to expect medical privacy, medical confidentiality was then merely a commodity to be bought and sold. Those who could not afford the fees faced public hospital care, lacking a rather key element of healthcare that we now hold up as a basic right. For some patients this may have mattered little. But

certainly for folks with particular medical concerns, privacy, or the lack thereof was a major issue complicating hospital care.

The movement of education into hospitals also raises the issue of dissections. Another strike against entering a hospital in this period was the fear that one might die there. Most people were absolutely sickened by the idea of being dissected, and they knew quite well that many who died in the hospital without friends or family to pay for a proper immediate burial awaited that fate. There are, indeed, sad stories from the period involving the terminally ill running away from the hospital in the night so that they might die somewhere else and avoid possible dissection.

Ultimately, the admissions process may have been the most important element for thinking about the poor and health care access in the eighteenth century. In the private voluntary hospitals one had to apply to a governor personally to seek a nomination for entry. Unfortunately, we have yet to find much evidence detailing these exchanges between wealthy hospital governors and impoverished supplicants. What is clear is that paupers needed to humble themselves and ask for this favour. Here, the power relationship was clear. Paupers had to negotiate the all important interview to determine whether they were “worthy objects of charity.” This phrase is omnipresent in eighteenth-century charitable literature. Voluntary hospitals stressed that only ‘worthy’ objects were to be relieved. This meant that one should not be perceived as lazy, irreligious, or immoral in any way. We have to assume that paupers tried their best to cut the figure of the good Christian, the hard working family man, or the good, chaste woman, as they supplicated themselves in hopes of a place. We are safe in assuming that a fair amount of role-playing probably took place as paupers vied to access the medical resources that their social betters held in their hands, trying to tell governors what they thought they wanted to hear. Here syphilitics faced a particularly uphill battle.

Even arranging to meet with a governor to plead one’s case might be difficult. We have reason to believe that a fair amount of networking had to take place to get into contact with a hospital governor. It is hardly surprising that the chimney sweeps, livery men, and unemployed people who needed hospital services ran in different social circles than the elite men who administered London’s hospitals. So another factor affecting healthcare access for the poor was the need to seek out a hospital governor and position oneself to plead for a hospital bed. Here sheer luck may have been the most important factor determining why one person received medical attention and another did not. As with so many things in life, one’s personal connections could easily spell the difference between success and failure when seeking medical assistance.

This was the case for the voluntary hospitals. The aforementioned Royal Hospitals functioned slightly differently. They began charging admission fees at the end of the seventeenth century. By 1700, patients needed to come up with between three and ten shillings to enter either St. Bartholomew’s or St. Thomas’s hospitals. Patients also had to post a bond of a Guinea (a hefty sum for working people in the eighteenth century) to cover

the cost of burial in case the patient died in the hospital. So plebeian patients who fell ill had to consider whether (and how) they might come up with this crucial funding. Essentially, these fees priced these hospitals out of the reach of many Londoners. Increasingly, these institutions catered to what we might call the working poor rather than the truly destitute.

Here we also begin to see the all-important factor of gender coming into play. More men than women were able to afford these services. In most years, approaching two-thirds of patients in the royal hospitals were men. When we look at how they arranged to get in, the gender divide becomes even clearer. Of all the women who entered St. Thomas's Hospital in the 1770s, one out of every five women had to first apply to their parish to beg for these admission fees, while less than one in twenty men had to do this. Most men were able to scratch together these funds either by themselves or through their networking resources. But fully 20% of all women were left without any options when they fell ill but to fall on parish relief.

Going to the parish for poor relief had its own issues. This meant that, in addition to the admissions committee at the hospital which one had to approach in order to get a place, one first had to negotiate the quandary of the eighteenth-century poor relief system. According to the English Poor Law, all residents of a parish could claim poor relief from their parish, which collected the "poor rates" (essentially a property tax) from its wealthier inhabitants and used the funds to relieve the poor. In the eighteenth century London was booming with migration, quickly racing towards having one million people by the dawn of the 1800 – the first European city to reach that mark. This brought massive strains to the poor relief system and parishes became ever tighter, ever more supercilious about granting relief. Often those who applied for relief had to undergo settlement examinations to prove they were legally "settled" in that parish, and frequently people were "removed" – that is, forcibly passed – back to their parish of birth, which could be more than a hundred miles away.

But the real stinger about parish relief became the workhouse. By the late 1720s, London parishes increasingly established workhouses to centralize poor relief in a single institution. These were aimed at setting the poor to work, ending the dole, and forcing relief recipients to give up their freedom of movement and undertake a regimen of forced labour. These were much more institutions of incarceration than were hospitals. However, the problem with setting up a "work" house for the poor was that the plan overlooked the fact that a large portion of the people driven to apply for relief were sick. They were not able-bodied workers, but frequently sick, injured and lame people unable to support themselves. In parishes like St. Luke's Chelsea upwards of 50% of all workhouse inmates were described as "sick," "injured," "lame," or "foul" (that is, syphilitic). Increasingly workhouses had to establish infirmaries to handle their significant medical obligations. Whereas in the seventeenth century the sick who applied for poor relief often got small sums of money to hire a doctor, in the eighteenth century their only option was to enter the dreaded workhouse.

The gendered realities of poverty determined that simply more women existed at this level of poverty than did men. When we look at the patient population of workhouse infirmaries, it is overwhelmingly female. While London's large hospitals tended to treat more men than women, all of its workhouse infirmaries treated in the neighbourhood of three women for every one man. For example, the workhouse infirmaries of St. Sepulchre, St. Margaret's Westminster, St. Andrew's Holborn, and St. Luke's Chelsea were dominated by female patients – women comprised between 73-78% of the patient population in all of these institutions. Workhouse infirmaries were London's "other hospitals," and they have gone largely unstudied for the eighteenth century. They also catered to other vulnerable populations. The other notable groups that utilized workhouses and their infirmaries were the very young and the very old. If one looks at who ended up in the workhouse it was society's poorest and weakest. Orphans, the elderly, and women (usually single women) predominated. Indeed, the demographic group of adult men between 18 and 55 are almost entirely absent. And when such men do turn up in a workhouse, it is almost always because illness or serious injury drove them into destitution.

There was, then, a multi-layered healthcare network for the poor, and economics played a pivotal role in determining one's medical options and illness-experiences in eighteenth-century London. To this point I have been talking about "the poor," but I want to clarify that this was a fluid group. People moved into and out of poverty, and illness played a crucial role in this process. Then, as now, there was an important reciprocal relationship between illness and poverty. On the one hand, one can see how the living conditions, diet, and working conditions of the eighteenth-century working class could frequently result in illness or injury. Poverty could make one sick. But the reverse was also true. Sickness could make one poor. Illness or injury often prevented folks from working and earning. Moreover, the costs of private medical care could drain working people's limited resources. Non-elite people who tried to take advantage of the medical market place described above often depleted their savings in their attempts to get well, hiring physicians and surgeons, or paying for medicines to try to self-medicate. Those who lived close to the poverty line were often only able to continue paying for private medical care for a limited time before they had to resign themselves to entering a hospital or workhouse.

We have good evidence that people tried to stay out of the hospital for as long as possible. But not everyone succeeded. For example, casebooks survive from St. Thomas's Hospital that record patients' information upon arrival. Some give case histories that list how long patients had been sick and how many different treatments they had tried before they arrived at the hospital. And here again, the influence of gender is clear. The men who entered St. Thomas's hospital in the 1730s had been battling their sickness for an average of about a year before they came petitioned to enter the hospital, consulting many different healers in that time. By contrast, their female counterparts entered the hospital just six months after they had fallen ill. This evidence demonstrates three things. First, most patients tried to deal with their illness on their own, as best they could. The hospital was a last resort, not a first choice. Secondly, illness itself was impoverishing. Over time, these people fell from a state in which

they could access private medical care and support themselves, to one in which they had to seek medical charity. Finally, the impact of gender on economics and health is also clear. On an average, eighteenth-century women had fewer resources to commit to their own health than did men. In a word, illness drove them into poverty twice as quickly. If we take entering a hospital as a signal of having reached a level of destitution, illness drove women to destitution twice as quickly as men, because they started closer to that line to begin with.

To this point the discussion has been somewhat in the abstract. But stories of individual patients can help to put a human face on the realities of the eighteenth-century medical scene. While the poor had a tough lot when they fell ill, I do not want to give a sense that they were entirely helpless. When we look closely at the poor we find that they exhibit a host of survival strategies, in spite of the fact that they found themselves in a weak position. The workhouse and these hospitals represented resources that they needed, and we can see plebeian patients trying to work the system in a number of ways. One example of this is a husband and wife named Henry and Jane Truslove. They lived in the parish of St. Sepulchre, London, and they can be found tapping into parish resources on twenty-five different occasions between 1734 and 1752. Henry was diagnosed with the pox, and the parish paid for his hospitalization in April 1735. Thereafter, the Trusloves seemed quite adept at prying money out of the churchwardens. They come back, every few months seeking relief – and getting it – always citing illness. Somehow they convinced the churchwardens not to force them into the workhouse. But what is interesting is that even though Henry's symptoms are recurring symptoms of his syphilis, he cites other general ailments when trying to claim relief; he said that he had a fever, an ague, or he that he was just "very ill." Like many venereal patients he sought to obscure the nature of his ailment, for fear that moral indignation would keep the churchwardens from relieving him. Sometimes Jane would apply on behalf of Henry, claiming that he was too sick to apply himself. Whatever their strategy, the Trusloves got a significant amount of money out of the parish, without ever having to enter the workhouse. The parish was a resource that they tapped quite effectively.

Other patients used the workhouse creatively as well, entering to get medical care in the infirmary, but then quickly resisting the workhouse discipline when they were transferred to the main wards. Jane Rawlins entered St. Sepulchre's workhouse to be treated for the pox in 1731. She appears to have been a dutiful inmate while she received treatment. But soon after she finished her course of treatment she refused to work, and she got herself thrown out of the house (which may indeed have been her exact strategy.) The records read "Jane Rawlins having for her misbehaviour been discharged, she having been salivated for the foul disease, behaved herself in a very bad manner and refused to work in the house – the committee ordered her discharged tomorrow." The common course of treatment for syphilis was about four weeks, and we find that many workhouse patients with that ailment actually ran away right about four weeks after they entered the house. Patients like Mary Lewin and James Latimer seemed to stick around just long enough to get their medicine, and then they voted with their feet.

Such patients risked being refused re-admission, and the fact was that they might well need these resources again. So this was a risky strategy. Mary Ashton ran away after two weeks in the workhouse infirmary. But her symptoms returned a few weeks later, and she had to apply for readmission. The committee refused her: "Mary Ashton saying she had the foul disease [i.e. syphilis] applied to be got into the infirmary but was denied having runaway with cloths formerly given her when she had applied for admission."

This pattern of resistance and frequent return to the workhouse marks a common aspect of the experience of poverty and illness in the eighteenth century. Some final cases can be taken as quite typical of the illness experiences of workhouse patients. A girl named Margaret Cock entered St. Luke's workhouse, along with her three sisters, at the age of 15 in September, 1746. She entered not because she was sick, but because her mother died and her father couldn't afford to keep her. The churchwardens arranged an apprenticeship for young Margaret in November, but she seems not to have stayed. She returned to live with her father, but he was still in no position to support her, and in April, 1748 she returned to the workhouse. Now sixteen years old, she was considered "able to work" and discharged. Again she returned to her father; again this proved an unacceptable situation; and again she returned to the workhouse in December, 1749. The house kept her a mere five days before putting her back on the street to find work. Within ten months she was back at the workhouse door, infected with the pox. She may have turned to prostitution, but we cannot know. She entered the infirmary and was under the care of the house surgeon for eighty-two days. In the meantime the officers arranged a domestic service position for her following her "cure." She left for this position on December 24, 1750. Sixteen days later Margaret's symptoms returned and she was back in St. Luke's infirmary. The surgeon decided that her case required hospital treatment, so the parish sent Margaret to St. Thomas' Hospital on January 17. She underwent the standard four-week regimen and was back in the workhouse by February 21. She may have needed to recover, or they may have had trouble finding work for a recent foul patient, because Margaret remained in the house until mid-July before she was sent to another domestic service position. Like clockwork Margaret returned ill to the infirmary in early October. She stayed in the house until spring, but in April she finally decided that she had had enough of St. Luke's workhouse. On April 22, 1752, the clerk recorded that she "got away over the wall." Despite her disdain for the institutions in which she had now spent a significant portion of her adult life, and despite her desire for independence, poverty and illness drove Margaret back to the workhouse by the end of October. On the thirty-first of the month Margaret humbled herself before the churchwardens and requested another petition for admission to St. Thomas, which they granted. Within two days she was on her way for a second stint in the Southwark hospital. She was still just 21 years old. She underwent another four-week mercury regimen and was back in the workhouse on December 7. Over the course of the winter the churchwardens again arranged a domestic service position for her. On February 10, Margaret left for her new job and finally disappears from the records.

If space allowed, a similar story could be related of a woman named Elizabeth Wyatt. She first entered the St Luke's workhouse infirmary in June 1750 at the age of 16, for a swelling in her neck. Over the next decade, one finds her entering her workhouse on fifteen separate occasions, each time to seek medical care. She ran away on three separate occasions, and formally requested to leave twice. The parish also paid for her treatment in hospitals on three occasions. Elizabeth clearly had a hard time deciding between the two rather bleak options of either living in the workhouse or roughing it on her own.

Women like Margaret and Elizabeth badly needed the services provided by St. Luke's workhouse infirmary. Neither seemed content to be there and both ran away. Yet each young woman found herself returning to seek re-admission. This dynamic marks a crucial component of the experience of poverty and the pox in eighteenth-century London. Elizabeth and Margaret were typical workhouse patients: poor single women. Regardless of their disdain for the workhouse, they needed it. Both women exhibited similar strategies when faced with the dual dilemma of poverty and illness. They each tried to negotiate the system to obtain the care they needed; but they each tried to do so on their own terms, choosing when they entered and when they left the infirmary.

The stories of individual patients can begin to shed light on what it was like to be poor and sick in eighteenth-century London. Certainly, it is informative to see how people in a relatively weak position still tried to negotiate the system. However, it is still clear that their healthcare options and room for maneuver were severely limited. One way to evaluate the healthcare system that existed at that time is to see it as essentially an extreme form of two-tiered medicine: there was care available from the private sector for paying patients alongside public care supported by tax revenue. This system was not just an English phenomenon as English-style Poor Laws were on the books in early English Canada, most notably in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick (surviving in the case of the latter into the 1960s). In some ways the English Poor Law system seems quite progressive; long before Tommy Douglas we witness a system in which tax revenues were collected by a central agency and used to provide relief – including medical care – for the needy. Yet this publicly supported system was *only* for the poor, and in time it came to take the form of the workhouse infirmary as its primary manifestation. (Here, too, it is worth noting that Canada again followed the English lead, establishing 'Houses of Industry' in cities like Halifax, Kingston and Toronto throughout the early nineteenth century.) Moreover, this system existed side by side with private, fee-charging medical options, resulting in a scenario in which one's access to healthcare was directly contingent upon their wealth. The best medicine available was only available to the wealthiest citizens.

Indeed, it is possible to render a qualitative comparison between private and public medicine in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Making such a comparison means going beyond cold statistics or attempts to judge the efficacy of one eighteenth-century treatment versus another. There are a range of issues that have to be examined when thinking about the overall quality of available healthcare, and (importantly) studying the patient's perspective can

help bring these issues into clearer focus. The circumstances in which care took place – whether in one’s own home or a workhouse infirmary – come to mind. So, too, does access: what one had to do to obtain care – whether coordinate care privately with the practitioner of one’s choosing, or negotiate the long, complex and unsure process of seeking relief under the poor law system. The sheer speed with which one could arrange care privately, when compared to the waiting game one might have to play as they sought a hospital bed, trying to raise the necessary funds or seek out a governor to plead for a bed, could similarly have important effects on one’s medical outcome. Consider also the issue of choice. Patients able to take advantage of the medical marketplace had a far greater range of medical options available to them when making their healthcare decisions, than did those who queued up at the hospital or workhouse gates. Finally, within this multi-tiered system who one was – their age, their gender (and in other historical contexts we would have to add their religion, ethnicity or race) – had a determinative effect on the range and quality of healthcare options available.

The fact that the early Canadian healthcare and poor relief systems drew heavily on the English model means that Canadians hoping to chart their own medical heritage would do well to explore the realities of medical life in places like late eighteenth-century London. When doing so, there are few better vantage points than that of the patients themselves.

ANTIQUES: OUR TREASURED LINK TO THE PAST

by

David P. Simmons

Our April speaker was local antique dealer and business man, David Simmons who specializes in 18th and 19th century collectible items with a particular interest in Moorcroft (David was responsible, in part, for the revival of the Moorcroft Factory in England). During his presentation, David revealed the excitement he experienced with his involvement in the enormous auction sale held to dispose of the large Massie estate. He also delighted the audience with verbal glimpses of the treasures he has found in garages, cellars and attics.

Through time, various categories of collectibles have stimulated periods of collecting fervour followed by times of over-abundance. The speaker's advice for these latter periods is to consider them as a time for enjoying such items from a non-monetary point of view.

Following his fascinating talk, David Simmons conducted a scaled-down version of the popular televised "Antiques Road Show" by identifying treasures belonging to our members.

**COBOURG AND DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY'S
SPRING TRIP**

For our May meeting, we alternate between having a dinner with a guest speaker and an organized bus trip. This year, thanks to the organizational skills of Dorothy De Lisle, members spent a wonderful day visiting the Robert Stuart Aeronautical Collection and Camp X Exhibit, the Oshawa Museum: Aeronautical, Military, Industrial (see Figures below), and the McLaughlin Art Gallery in Whitby and Oshawa.





HISTORICAL SNIPPETS

by

John Jolie

Editor, *Historically Speaking*

☞ **September 2003 – Number 181 – The Golden Plough Gets Its Name or Cobourg Gets Mention at U.N. or The First World Plowing Match** (Choose your own topic-heading for this story.)

This fall marks the 50th anniversary of the First World Ploughing Match. Plowing matches go back about 200 years. In England, John Christian Curwen founded the Workington Agricultural Society and spent his life promoting agricultural innovation in England, including competitions. The idea of farming contests spread over the Atlantic and soon our region had similar events.

The plowing matches gained enough stature that a decision was made to make the competitions an international event. It was at the 1951 British Plowing Match in Stirling, Scotland, that Canada was awarded the honour of holding the first world event and Cobourg was to be the host community! Invitations were sent out to National Champions from around the world.

Our local committee used the land owned by the county, on which the Home for the Aged stood (at the junction of William, Burnham and Elgin Streets). The property stretched northwards past the 401 (not yet in existence). Foster Russell, publisher of the *Cobourg Sentinel Star*, was the chairman of Publicity for the event and his book is the main source for this story. Russell, a person who did not understate the news, noted that to host the first plowing match meant “that Cobourg will have the honour...never before given to any town in Canada...something that no other town or city can claim in the whole universe.”

Governor General Vincent Massey travelled from his home at Batterwood north of Port Hope to open the matches on October 6, 1953. Massey proclaimed that events such as these gave farmers the chance to see new techniques and to get back to the “roots in that ancient fellowship of the soil.” The view from the top of the hill, taking in the large tent city must have been impressive. Seven nations were represented. The large number of volunteer and organizations indicated the extent of the involvement of local citizens. Many of the thousands of visitors were fed by church groups. Bands from all over the country performed. It was noted that the Timothy Eaton tent poured 24,000 free cups of tea. Many local residents brought out their rural family heirlooms for display. From all accounts, the Plowing Match was a huge success.

Two years later, to commemorate the event, the stone cairn was erected. Prime Minister Lester Pearson and Paul Martin Sr., Minister of Health and Welfare, attended the ceremony. The monument stands immediately in front of the realigned Elgin Street, in front

of the Golden Plough. The unveiling of the cairn was on September 12, 1955. Paul Martin Sr. was the keynote speaker. Then, within a few weeks, Martin went to New York to address the United Nations General Assembly. His U.N. speech was reported in the October 6, 1955 issue of the *Cobourg Sentinel Star*. Here is a small part of Martin's speech to this world body:

Mr. President,...two weeks ago, I had the pleasure of visiting the Canadian Community of Cobourg...and of dedicating a Cairn of Peace in commemoration of the First World Plowing Match held here two years before. I mention this...because atop the cairn was a Golden Plough bearing the inscription: THAT MAN MAY USE THE PLOUGH TO CULTIVATE PEACE AND PLENTY...WHAT BETTER SYMBOL COULD BE FOUND FOR OUR DETERMINATION TO BRING ABOUT THE BIBLICAL PROPHECY: THEY SHALL BEAT THEIR SWORDS INTO PLOUGHSHARES...

In commemoration of the event, the Home for the Aged was renamed the Golden Plough Lodge. The organizing committee at the time preferred to use the old spelling "plough."



The Golden Plough Cairn. Photograph © John Jolie 2004

☛ **October 2003 – Number 182 – Peter’s Rock (aka Gull Island, aka Duck Island)**

(Location: Sail out of Cobourg towards Port Hope – you can’t miss it!)

Sailors plying the waters between Cobourg and Port Hope follow a relatively straight shoreline. There is really only one concern and that is the limestone reef around Peter’s Rock. Until recently, the rock had a beacon to warn boaters, but now there is nothing.

Oral tradition passed down from the earliest settlers had reports of a sand spit stretching from the shoreline to the island. One story had three trees growing on the isle. Originally named Gull island (then briefly, Duck Island), it has been the scene of numerous shipwrecks. After several boats had hit the rocks, a large lighthouse 45 feet high was constructed on the island between 1836 and 1840. Lighthouse keepers were posted there during the shipping season. One keeper, Robert Roddick, lived onshore in calm times, but during stormy weather, remained at the lighthouse. Over the years he was credited with saving many lives.

The *William IV*, a steamboat, once grounded on those rocks. The cargo had to be off-loaded before the ship floated free. The *Constitution*, out of Oakville, was stranded for a day, and it, too, had to be lightened. The wreck of the schooner *Canada* was the deadliest accident on Peter’s Rock. During the night of December 1-2, 1848, a severe wind and rain storm pushed the *Canada* on to the rocks. A large crowd gathered on the shore to watch the crisis unfold. They watched for hours as five sailors clung desperately to the rigging, struggling to survive in frigid water. Rescue boats repeatedly tried to get out to the ship, but fierce waves beat them back. By 2 p.m., two of the men had tried to swim to shore and were rescued by someone who took his horse into the raging water. When it was over, one source (Reeve) states that three had drowned while another (Riddell) says four of the crew died.

Another ship which disappeared was the schooner *Emerald*. It left Toronto on November 3, 1903 with seven crew. It disappeared in a storm. Wreckage was found east of Gull Island (Peter’s Rock) some time later, and that may have been debris from the *Emerald*. Other ships were wrecked too, but their names are long forgotten.

Over the years, wave erosion has destroyed the lighthouse and washed the island away. But the rocks still await inattentive sailors.

Related Trivia: According to Harold (Kip) Reeve, schooner construction was the biggest employer in Port Hope a century and a half ago (*Schooner Days*).

Sources:

Craik. *Little Tales of Old Port Hope*.

Riddell, Walter. *Historical Sketches of the Township of Hamilton 1897*.



☞ November 2003 – Number 183 – When 47 Strangers ‘Dropped in’ for Breakfast

The C46, a twin-engined plane, was a large plane for its time. Such a plane was owned by Major Air Coach Lines and was being used to transport American military personnel and their families. In late December, 1951, a C46 with 47 on board was serving that purpose. Bruce Smelser was captain. The flight originated in Burbank, California, and the destination was to be Newark, New Jersey.

Once in the air, problems started almost immediately. The plane had to land in Palmdale, California, when the heating system malfunctioned. They spent the night in the hanger, with no comforts. The next landing was in Chicago. The landing there was very rough. It was discovered that ice had been causing trouble with the wheels. A further holdup of 40 minutes occurred when the control tower “lost” another plane somewhere on the airfield! Once the C46 finally became airborne, the conditions became even worse. The weather had become increasingly foggy. Then, radio communications started to become erratic. The last transmission received was with Toledo (Ohio). It was so full of static, it was unintelligible. Within minutes, the radio went totally dead! That was about 2 a.m. Darkness, for, no radio...the crisis was already at hand, but conditions became much worse! After about five hours of flying like that, one of the two engines quit! That woke up some of the passengers. Concerns were expressed. Frantic efforts by the crew to restart the engine failed. The pilot did not tell the passengers, but the crew was lost, really lost! In fact, they were about 600km off course!

That fog turned into snow during the night. The pilot flew as low as he dared, trying to see anything that might help to get them out of that mess. Cobourg resident, Ray Bell, has told me [the author] that he seems to remember that the crew managed to pick up radio station CKEY in Toronto and tried to hone in on that signal.

Eventually, the stewardess was instructed to inform the passengers about the situation and to instruct them to remain seated. Near dawn, about six hours after takeoff, a brief break in the clouds revealed that they were flying over water, the waves plainly visible. Rumours among the 47 passengers spread that they were over the Atlantic, and surely headed for their demise!

Then, through the falling snow, land was spotted on the horizon. Captain Smelser turned his plane towards that shoreline to the north, still not having a clue as to where they were. (Memories fail at this point. There may have been heavy snow, or a break in the storm.) Regardless, there were no options left, and the pilot opted to land on a field, just beyond that unknown body of water they had been flying over. The engine was cut, the plane came down in silence. It hit the ground, took out a wire fence and slid across the field for about 100 yards before coming to a stop. With luck, with little fuel left that could explode, and with a foot and a half of snow to soften the impact, there were no serious injuries! The propellers had been

bent, but there was little other damage that could not be repaired. The landing took place about 7:45 a.m. It was Thursday, December 20, 1951.

The landing site was on Charlie Wilson's farm, just west of Cobourg, now partly occupied by the new Canadian Tire store. The Wilsons were hurriedly informed by their neighbour Harold Drinkwater about the visitors who had just 'dropped in.'

Ray Bell, who had been working downtown, heard about the landing and rushed to the site. He witnessed the 47 passengers and crew leaving the plane. Meanwhile, the Wilsons invited everyone in – the passengers and crew, reporters, local police, the OPP – and by dinner, even the RCMP were warming up the house. Burley Bus Line of Port Hope took the people from the plane to Trenton where they boarded another bus to Newark. One passenger, a member of the military, complained that four days of his furlough were already gone and he wasn't home yet! He was highly critical of the airline.

What were they do with that big plane in Charlie Wilson's field? The first idea was to remove the wings and haul the plane to Trenton, but there were too many obstacles along the way. Large, special jacks propped up the plane. It was decided to attempt a takeoff from the farm. Over the next few days the ground froze solid. The ground was levelled with Ron Gagnier's bulldozer. The hydro lines were lowered to the ground near Highway #2. The damaged propellers were replaced and the plane stripped of all unnecessary weight. Only the fuel needed to get to Trenton was put aboard. It was a little late, but arrival and departure clearance with Canada Customs was obtained. The plane revved up and raced across the farm. Fred Aldridge told me that the plane was able to use a slight rise in slope on the field to assist it in becoming airborne. Everyone held their breath until the plane cleared Highway #2, by all of five feet! The C46 continued on to Trenton. This was on January 9, 1952.

Sources:

Aldridge, Fred	Local Resident
Bell, Ray	Local resident
<i>Cobourg Sentinel Star</i>	Dec. 27, 1951; Jan. 3, 1952; Jan. 10, 1952; Jan. 17, 1952
<i>Globe and Mail</i>	Dec. 21, 1951; Jan. 9, 1952; Jan. 10, 1952
<i>Peterborough Examiner</i>	Dec. 26, 1951; Dec. 10, 1951; Jan. 9, 1952; Jan. 10, 1952



☪ January 2004 – Number 184 – A Licence To Print Money

In the early days of Canada, most people were self-sufficient for basic necessities; they had to be. They planted, raised, or hunted their own food supplies. Building bees were used to accomplish bigger projects. Money was rare in Upper Canada. Barter was far more

prevalent. For example, one might trade chickens for some horseshoeing. Some businesses and banks made their own tokens. The token might have a monetary value stamped on it. Or, it might have value for obtaining some item such as, for example, bread or beer. If you did not want that particular item, then trade was more difficult. Something had to be done. The Government, lacking regular shipments of coins from British mints, decided to give a few communities a licence to print money! Cobourg was one of only a handful of those places that had permission to do that.

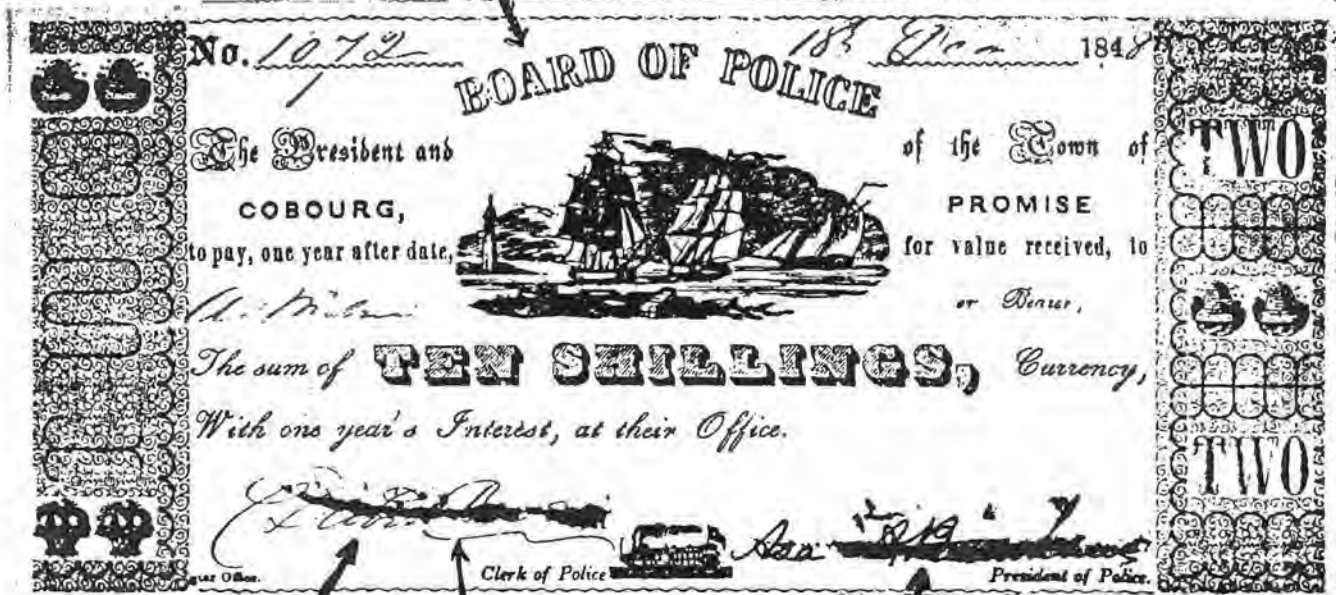
Our money had two denominations, five and 10 shillings. The money was printed up by the Cobourg Star. The bills had to be signed by members of the Board of Police, the forerunner to the Town Council. The bills were circulated and when returned, the signatures were inked out, cancelling their legality. Most of the cancelled money was destroyed afterwards.

Depending on their quality and the particular bill, the collector's value of Coburg money runs from \$15 to \$625.

All bills were Black

Not until Baldwin did we have incorporated towns
The settlements were run by Police Boards

The TWO is the
American Dollar Equivalent



David Brodie was
Clerk

The blotted out signatures
made the money invalid

Asa Burnham was
President of the Police Board

February 2004 – Number 185 – The Cobourg Connection

Close to the King Street entrance to Victoria Park there is an historical plaque acknowledging William Weller, stage coach magnate. Weller’s Royal Mail stage coach runs made him a giant in early Ontario transportation. His role as mayor, investor in our railroad, telegraph lines, and promoter of Cobourg made him one of our most prominent citizens. Despite being a Cobourger, Weller had offices along his stage coach routes with the major depot in Toronto, not Cobourg. Weller’s Toronto office was in a building built on the “Coffin Block” (named for the shape of the lot). This shaped property is at Wellington and Church (Figure 1).

In the *Historical Review* of 1999-2000, pages 50-51, I wrote about the Toronto Gooderhams and how William Gooderham, in particular, changed the history of Cobourg when he willed his distillery fortune to Victoria University under the proviso that the university move out of Cobourg and relocate in Toronto. It did. Later, successor George Gooderham, wanted a new building to serve as the headquarters for the family enterprise. He chose to erect the company office on the Coffin Block lot. There he built the distinctive Gooderham Building, referred to locally as the “Flatiron Building” (Figure 2),

Gooderham and Worts became the largest distillery company in the Empire. Today, what was once the core of the Gooderham operations is now the “hot” Distillery District, several blocks east of the famous Flatiron Building. The property has 47 buildings on the site. That industrial complex has been preserved and has been used as the historical background for a number of movies.

It is worth your time to visit Open Doors Toronto next May [2004] and take in the Gooderham Building and Distillery District. While you are there, stop and imagine our William Weller standing out in front of the earlier building, dreaming up new transportation ventures.



The building in these pictures housed the Wellington Hotel, the Dominion Telegraph Office and Weller's Stage Coach Lines. The pie-shaped block on which it stood was called the Coffin Block and the western end, owned by Scott Street, Wellington and from Stora joined the sides, separating together at Church Street.



Figure 1 (above): Weller “Coffin” Building
 Figure 2 (right): Gooderham “Flatiron” Building
 Photograph © John Jolie 2004

☞ March 2004 – Number 186 – Chains, Acres and Road Allowances

When this area was about to be settled by United Empire Loyalists, there was a flurry of unprecedented activity. Natives had been present for thousands of years, but the newcomers wanted to have their property staked, recorded on paper, and accessible.

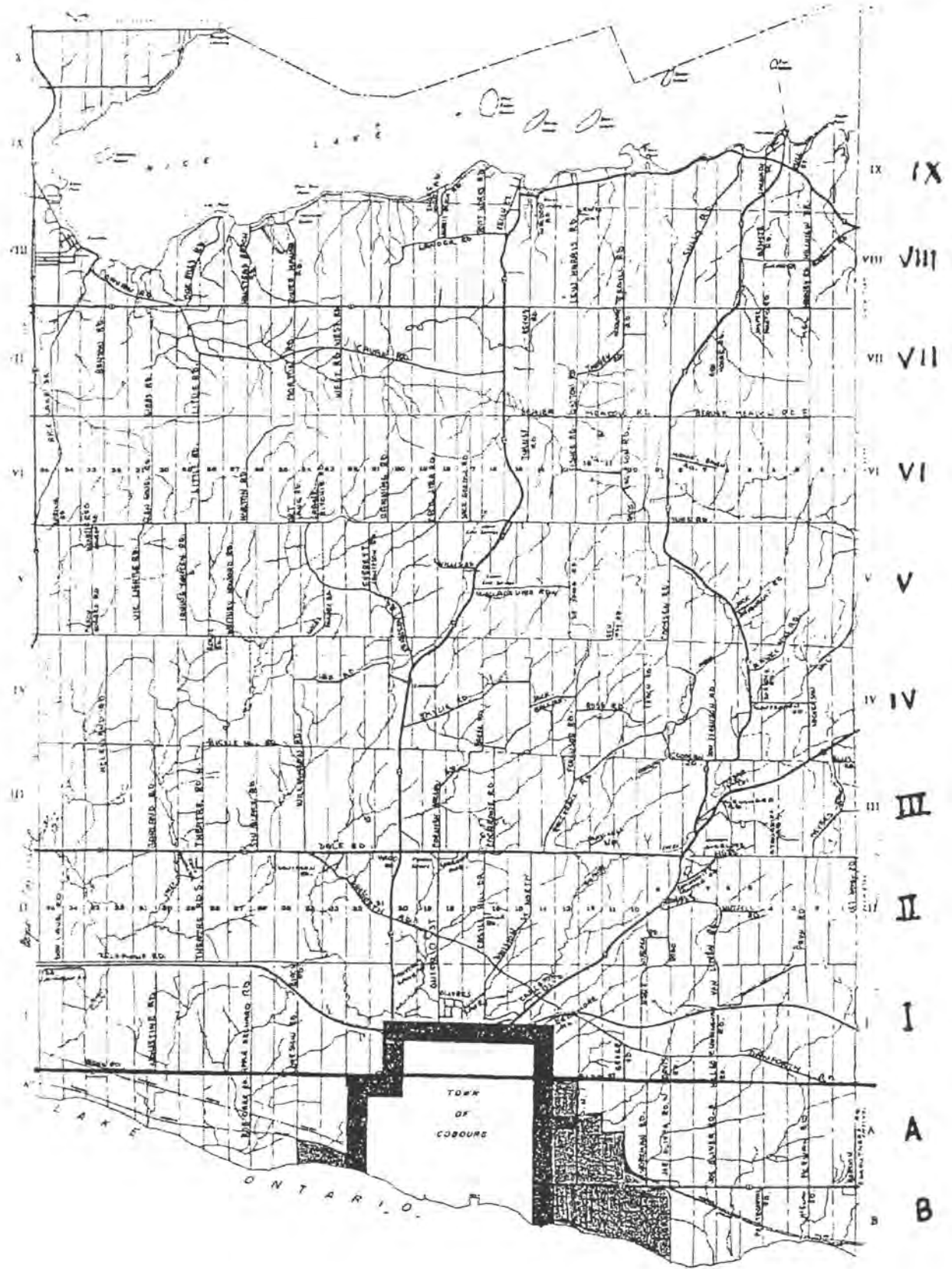
The government hired surveyors to divide the land. I should not signal out one person, but Augustus Jones was a chief surveyor hired to cross this area. The only practical way to accomplish the boundary demarcations was to use chains to mark off the big distances. The surveyor would carry a chain, 66 feet long, with a pole at each end. Two men could measure off miles of land with relative speed. Taking hasty measurements over huge tracts often meant creating imprecise, illogical boundaries, something that future generations could sort out.

Hamilton Township was divided into 200 acre lots, 100 chains by 20 chains (1/4 mile by 1 1/4 miles). The first survey line measured was most likely Elgin Street. Above Elgin is Concession I, stretching for 1 1/4 miles. Telephone Road is the baseline for Concession II, and Dale Road is the beginning of Concession III. Below Elgin, there are baselines which run into the lake. These concessions are partial concessions, and are named with letters, A or B. If the lots are not a full 200 acres, they are called “broken front lots.” Settlers who received those partial lots often owned the lot to the north as well. (This shoreline property was often marshland.)

A single chain was a critical measurement. That 66 feet was the width of the road allowance, the place to put roads, and later, an ideal spot for telephone lines, sewers, sidewalks and water. This “road allowance” width became incredibly useful, but early town development overlooked the need to keep that chain measurement. A glimpse of Hamilton Township’s maps shows irregularities on the property lines. The hilly terrain blocked lines of sight. Marsh, creeks, and trees too big or too numerous to clear, made the crews eager to make deviations. (I don’t doubt that more than a few liquid lunches effected their math, as well.)

A farmer in the township had a road allowance at the north and south of the property. There was also a road allowance, either on the west, or east side of his property. As one can see on the map, most roads did not adhere to the allowance. The terrain necessitated the legalization of “forced roads” – those not conforming to where the surveys had located them.

(See map on following page)



☞ April 2004 – Number 187 – A Learning Experience:

The flat valley floors that many of our streams lie in are called flood plains. They were created by rivers cutting back and forth, flooding, eroding, and then depositing the alluvial material as flood waters subsided. They appear to be attractive sites to build on: the soil was fertile; the land flat, and water easily available. They also seemed to be ideal as transportation corridors – no hills! The builders of the Cobourg-Peterborough Railroad used the flat valley floor of Baltimore Creek to reach up to Dale Road. From the height of land, they sought out another valley to get down into Harwood.

The confluence of Cobourg (Factory) and Baltimore Creeks is in James Cockburn Park. (When Queen Elizabeth came to town in June of 1973, she crossed the bridge at the confluence of these streams [Figure 1] to unveil a cairn in the park.)

The park is on a flood plain. The Ganaraska Conservation Authority, which can set regulations on such land, has the power to restrict flood plain development. A summer walk along these tiny streams may have an observer wondering about such building restrictions. However, the picture taken on March 1, 1997 (Figure 2) clearly illustrates the wisdom of keeping off all development off flood plains. When the devastating flood of March 1980 hit, only the middle part of the handrail was above water. The stream became a wide river, covering the park, rising to within a few metres of William Street.

Over the years, there have been many dams and mills built on local streams. Floods often damaged the mills along the waterways. Several drownings have occurred.



Figure 1: Bridge at confluence of rivers in Rotary Park. Photograph © John Jolie 2004



Figure 2: Same bridge during spring thaw, March 1, 1997. Photograph © John Jolie 2004



☞ May 2004 – Number 188 – Notes compiled from School Board records by students. Material was destined to be used in a secondary school Local History course during the 1970s.

Edith Kerr Macdonald:

People in this area should know of her. Hardly any of us do. In the First World War, women were finally given the right to vote. They were also given the opportunity to run for office.

Edith Kerr was a teacher at the Grammar School (high school). Through marriage, Miss Kerr became Mrs. Kerr Macdonald. In the 1926 municipal election, Edith Kerr Macdonald was elected to the Cobourg Town Council. In doing so, she made history. The *Cobourg Sentinel Star* stated that she was possibly the first female municipal politician ever elected in Ontario! When Mrs. Macdonald was appointed to the Police Committee in Cobourg, she was deluged with pleas from women for help. It seemed as if no one had been speaking for them. She served on Town Council for several years.

One can find an article written by her in Edwin Guillet's book, *Cobourg 1798-1948* on page 195.



Dr. Powell:

Dr. Powell was a member of the local school board. He wrote many interesting minutes while he was board secretary. Neither individuals, nor institutions, escaped his witticisms. When an Ingersoll church minister asked the board to purchase his book, *Mistakes of Modern Infidels*, Power wrote that the board "laid it on the table." When a tree in a schoolyard died, his minutes noted that "the willow tree at No.4 School was mournfully expressed and the Board silently adjourned." In 1887, a meeting was apparently held outside. Powell mused about the change, "enjoying to the full extent the sweet pure air of heaven, rather than the odorous mixture filling the Town Clerk's office – something with which they have long been familiar." In another reading of the minutes he wrote, "...owing to a dim light, the chairman's signature was deferred to a more luminous period." The absence of an official was noted thus: "Mr. D__ was unable to attend a meeting due to "one of the several maladies which afflict the just." When serious floods hit Cobourg in 1889, a teacher's property was affected. The Board, through Dr. Powell, wrote a note of compassion to Mr P__: "Mr. P__, at this time, who is burdened with a serious trouble and loss by a wonderful dispensation of Providence, the destruction of the Mill Dam..."

Dr, Powell's health began to fail. His last meeting as secretary was on December 3, 1889 when the Bagot Street School was the big topic. The last minutes conclude with his note that: "many and various were the questions which after came up, but the name Jesuit was not even mentioned, so the Board was adjourned.

