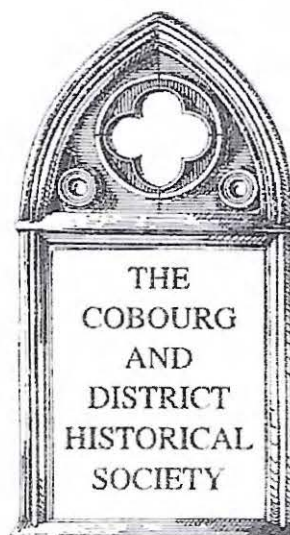


HISTORICAL REVIEW 24



2006

2007



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THE COBOURG AND DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY
PROGRAMME OF SPEAKERS

2006 –2007

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Cover Photograph: 475 George Street. Children's party circa 1895.

The Cobourg and District Historical Society Archives 1987-2007

Loyalist Adventure Tour - May 23, 2006

On May 23 The Cobourg and District Historical Society took an interesting and scenic but trip in Loyalist



Country. Via Coach Canada we explored the beautiful countryside around Hay Bay, taking in the historic church and proceeding to Adolphustown. There we visited the United Empire Loyalist Heritage Centre and Park, the historic cemetery and the Adolphustown Town Hall. We proceeded along the Loyalist Parkway beside Lake Ontario with a stop in Napanee for lunch and a short presentation in the Lennox and Addington Museum and Archives before exploring the area. Finally we visited historic MacPherson House and viewed a great variety of architectural styles in the homes nearby. All had an excellent time

Alderville First Nation: People of the Mnoomin...the Good Rice By David Mowat, B.A. (Adv.)

Introduction

This presentation will focus on one person, Mr. Frederick Simpson (Sr.) of Alderville Indian Reserve or as it was formerly known, the Alnwick Indian Band, now formerly the Alderville First Nation. In his prime Simpson crossed an ocean as a marathon runner to bear the maple leaf for Canada in the 4th Olympiad while as an



Indian he was dispossessed of the franchise and the fundamental rights we take for granted today. Born in 1878 to James Simpson and Mary Simpson of Alderville he was brought into the world at a time when Canada was but 11 years old, just a kid itself. Macdonald was campaigning to win back the government he had lost hold of 5 years earlier, and the consolidated Indian Act had been on the books for 2 years now, soon to exact a crushing blow to Anishinabe traditional governance at the local

level. Fred Simpson would be raised during a time of what we might deem overwhelming and oppressive legislated racism toward his people, but proves to be an almost anomaly. Through the life of Fred Simpson this presentation will endeavour to give the audience a look at the Alderville Ojibway community at a time when great transformation was occurring in the administration of Indian Affairs, and when Indian athletes such as Simpson broke out of the oppression to challenge the world.

The Mnoomin relates to the wild rice, the good rice, that was the backbone of the Mississauga Ojibway culture and economy throughout southern Ontario. The rice harvest was a celebration, there were picnics, gatherings and the like that took place at harvest locations such as Sugar Island situated near the north shore of Rice Lake in close proximity to the mouth of the Indian River. Throughout time Sugar Island had been a processing location for the rice harvest, and is an important historical point of context in the study of early cultures of the southern Ontario region, with human evidence dating back to the time of Christ. Rice Lake is abundant with archaeological data, artifacts and other evidence including early European accounts

of their travels through it. As shallow as it was and is, Rice Lake holds a mysterious story in the development of southern Ontario. Never a mystery was the lakes' ability to nurture some of the densest wild rice beds in North America. The Mississauga Nation was borne of its attachment to the rice fields, in part, and so the reference to the Mnoomin is quite fitting.

Fred Simpson Sr.

Fred Simpson was himself one of Alderville's great "ricers. This sturdy man was a product of the modern assault upon his culture, raised in the church and on the lake, raised under the shadow of "the Indian Agent" and defined as to who he was as an "Indian" by the Indian Act 1876, but never relinquishing his identity or his language or his traditions. He never spoke of any feelings about being Indian¹ as such, at least not from the legislated side of the equation. Socially he knew his position and as an active athlete would refer to that in certain ways in the record and in the oral tradition². But he stayed in the rice fields for the better part of his life, stayed close to the land, to Sugar Island; was an Olympian, took on the world in his game back in 1909, an original road runner he was. He raced for Canada and the Maple Leaf but was always an Ojibway. Fred Simpson was a bridge between two cultural sides in Ontario, white and Indian. This is the brief story of the man and his community.

The Mississauga Ojibway - Post 1878

He was a second generation Alderville Mississauga. The Mississauga were a branch of the larger Ojibway Nation and had come to these parts of Ontario during the conquest over the Iroquois, when the latter were driven south across Lake Ontario around the beginning of the 18th century. Generally in the tradition of "the coming of the Mississauga's"³ the oral tradition says that the Mississauga name traveled with the Ojibway located at the Mississagi River on the north shore of L. Huron. The Jesuits had been there and recorded them in the 1630s as the 'oumisagi'.⁴ The name refers to that place at the mouth of a river, and has been carried to place names like Saugeen and Zsaageeng, Mississagi, The Mississauga's of Rice Lake at Hiawatha, Alderville Mississaugas, New Credit, and Scugog for instance, all of which are First Nation communities in Ontario and Manitoba. One of Ontario's largest and progressive centres, the City of Mississauga, also bears the name, for all along the north shore of Lake Ontario the Mississauga Ojibway had gained this land in war with their traditional enemies of the Iroquois Confederacy.

Alderville in 1878 had come through the great conversion period 40 and 50 years earlier when Mississauga men gave their lives to God and went on the road as it were, exhorting and working as servants to the Methodist mission in Upper Canada. Men such as Peter Jones (Kahkewaquonaby), John Sunday (Shawundis), Peter Jacobs (Pahtahsega), Allan Salt (Azoshay), all had eventually found their way to the pulpit, between the 1830s and 50s. Jones for instance was converted at Ancaster in 1823, Jacobs in Belleville in 1825 and Sunday in 1826 at the Bay of Quinte. By the 1830s all three were ordained in the Methodist and Wesleyan Methodist Church. A younger Allan Salt would go out on his mission by the 1850s.

Life had been difficult and the culture suffered in the wake of the American Revolution when settlement was opened up into what became Upper Canada in 1791. Once as military allies to the British against the Americans in their colonial struggles, the Mississauga eventually became less important in that regard as the seed of 'liberal democracy' was planted in Upper Canada. As an economic shift occurred over the growing colony the Mississauga along the Lake Ontario frontier were expected to adapt. The predecessors of Alderville had been at the Bay of Quinte and Kingston region and back through the hinterland. They were in the face of early settlement at the Bay, and had given up land for settlers and disbanded troops, so that the British would be in a position to accommodate their loyal citizens and other Indian allies⁵ on the north

¹ In this paper the word Indian is used to reflect the legal terminology of the day. The term 'Anishinabe' (Nishnabe) reflects what the Ojibway understand themselves to be both then and now.

² This is a reference to what the writer remembers growing up hearing stories of Fred Simpson the runner. The oral tradition refers to the stories of such people as Jack Simpson (1901-1988), Lucy Simpson Crowe (1904-1973), Lucy Muskrat (1899-1999), Alton Bigwin (1927 -), Kingsley Crowe (1927 -)

³ Robert Paudash, 'The Coming of the Missasagas', Ontario Historical Society Records and Papers, 1904.

⁴ 'Jesuit Relations'

⁵ The Iroquois had also been an ally of the British during the American Revolutionary War, and the Six Nations and Tyendinega are results of relocated Mohawk/Iroquois allies.

side of Lake Ontario after 1783. For the ensuing 40 years the Mississauga had lost or given up more land and by the mid to late 1820s began converting to Christianity and undergoing a profound social change.

History at times has suggested that the Mississauga of this region only began *living* once they reached the mission at Grape Island in the Bay of Quinte, circa, 1827. History has taught us that the Mississauga Indians did not have much of a history to begin with, which would be inaccurate of course, for Tecumseh had been to our people probably in the first decade of the 18th century, and before that the Mississauga had been present in Upper New York state during the Revolutionary War. Before that again they had sent the 'Mohawks' south across the big lake. That they did not have a history in the region would be a drastic oversight.

But as time and history progressed, through the transformation of the 1850s, to the shift in responsibility for Indians from the British Home Government to the colony in 1860, to Confederation 1867, to the Indian Act 1876, Indians had been disenfranchised, reduced to wards of the government, legally not possessed of the right to own property, placed in Alderville on 3000 acres as a group never traditionally living in sedentary communities, and at one time possessing millions of acres in their old region. Liberalism and liberal democracy had rooted out the First Nations and had "redefined the relationship between the individual and society" and brought forth "the emergence of the modern secular state." The attitudes that had developed through the 19th century then were "embedded in English colonial imperialism"⁶ and like the lower disenfranchised classes caught up in the Industrial Revolution in England the Mississauga and their brethren were *expected* to desire the necessary social change and elevate themselves to citizenship. To do less in the minds of the agents of change would be inferior.

By the 1870s the original Methodist enthusiasm that existed amongst some of those young Mississauga men had waned considerably throughout the collective. Canada's creation of the Department of Indian Affairs by the 1880s put a visible entity around "the enemy," that is around the government departmental machine now driving Indian policy.⁷ A close-minded legally racist and accepted mindset with an oppressive set of laws directed at controlling Indians' participation in the nation-state was intact by the 1880s. What the first generation convert and warrior John Simpson had accomplished in converting and working within the church while helping to move the people to Alderville beginning in the late 1820s through to the 50s, did not resonate in the subsequent generations. The group of what we would call first generation Alderville Mississauga members, those born in the late 1830s and 1840s at Alderville, were eventually subjected to a harsher policy regime and education system by the 1850s and onward, right at home in the Alderville Industrial School.

The Industrial School

The Alderville School was the product of the Bagot Commission, ca. 1844 when the colonial government set to determining what would be the best solution to "the Indian problem." Numerous witnesses testified on behalf of the subject, and one particular recommendation of the commission was the creation and construction of Industrial Schools, one each at Owen Sound, Muncey, and Alderville, the latter school having its corner stone laid in 1849. The schools would help the Indians make the economic shift so it was believed, but throughout the 1850s as the push for assimilation increased and as conservative agents of change worked to facilitate it, and as children showed signs of losing touch with the culture and language and traditional value systems, so the communities resisted the efforts to assimilate them. The Alderville Industrial School plan then failed within a relatively short timeframe ending in the 1860s.

James Simpson, father of Fred, had been a student at the Alderville School, but does not become anything other than an ordinary member of the community, one who worked the land, harvested the rice and followed the traditions of the people. He would drown on Rice Lake in 1883 when Fred was but 5 years old. James and Mary had a number of children before he was taken at a young age, leaving the children and her alone in a time when the Department of Indian Affairs was yet 3 years old. It could not have been an easy time for the family for Mary drops out of the record between the censuses of 1881 and 1891 never to be seen again.

⁶ Enough to Keep Them Alive: Indian Welfare in Canada, 1873-1965: Hugh Shewell. University of Toronto Press, 2004, p. 17.

⁷ Shewell, Enough to Keep Them Alive

By 1891 Fred along with siblings including brother Alfred, were residing with grandmother Mary, widow of John Simpson the first.

Life in Alderville at this time consisted of local farming, an expectation to adhere to the church, hunting and gathering and if possible, assimilation. But assimilation failed, at Alderville and it was failing across the nation. The people had now become disenfranchised, a class unto its own legally in the colony, a class removed from the progress of the liberal democratic system and the flow of capitalism. They were expected to change and adapt to the very system that had relegated them to their disenfranchised social position in the first place. How could they have faith in a system that had accomplished this in less than 60 years? And so while a small number of individuals did enfranchise thereby giving up their Indian status and their rights, the numbers remained forever small throughout time causing the government to fail miserably in its attempts to eradicate the reserve system and Indians in this manner.

As Simpson grew into a man he did not join the clergy, did not follow in the footsteps of those who had gone before him out into the fold, but stayed on the land, close to the reserve and he kept his identity intact. What the government attempted to do caused the opposite in the people, which was to sustain and protect their identity. He kept his Ojibway language and the traditions in the wild rice beds and on Sugar Island, and in the forest where he had developed into a crack shot with a rifle, but at the same time did adhere to the word of God as he learned it through the Wesleyan Methodists. He worked in the fields, and developed into a strong and enduring young man. Many of his contemporaries on the reserve did the same thing, hiring out to local farmers, or sustaining themselves on the land to the best of their ability. In fall time they would go back north to the old hunting grounds in the present Algonquin Park area, or go down the Trent River where they might trap, fish, harvest berries, and hunt.

The New Century

Fred married Susan Muskrat of the Hiawatha Reserve situated on the north side of Rice Lake. One might guess that their union came to be by way of the harvest get-togethers and the picnics at places like Sugar Island. Hiawatha had received its name from the Prince of Wales in 1860 when he visited the area, and traveled from Cobourg to Rice Lake to meet the people of this quaint little village. Being an avid reader of the poet Longfellow, the Prince named the village in honour of the poet's lengthy and famous piece entitled *Hiawatha*, and the name has been with that community ever since. It was at Hiawatha that Fred would relocate after marrying the younger Susan in 1900. A year later they brought their first son into the world, followed by 2 daughters in 1903 and 1904.

Fred worked the fields in nearby Mather's Corners near Keene, location of the most recent International Plowing Match, for white farmers such as Thomas Taylor. At trapping time in spring the men at Hiawatha and Alderville would ply the waters of Rice Lake for muskrat and beaver and in some cases harvest 4 or 5 hundred 'rats'. At a price in the neighbourhood of .40 cents a pelt one can imagine how important this trade was to the Mississauga at both reserves⁸. Fred was not however, according to his eldest son, "a crackerjack of a trapper"⁹ but plied the waters more so as a fishing guide and a ricer. His life was simple, and that of his contemporaries, and the expectations on his culture immense and overbearing. But Fred Simpson was a man seemingly unmoved, and within a short period would prove it to his country and the world.

1906

In October of 1906 the Peterborough Examiner sponsored a road race to take place from Lakefield to Peterborough, a distance of about 10 miles. Newspapers had been sponsoring such events for some time as it was not only good for business, but it promoted the virtues of athletics, specifically amateur athletics, and the values of participation and gentlemanly competition. As a man known for his stamina and strength in the local fields around Hiawatha, Fred was immediately urged by friends on the reserve to try his hand at this road race, and that he did. The race was a remarkable public relations and marketing coup by the

⁸ Based on the market, muskrat and beaver pelts would fluctuate at Rice lake, but during the first decade of the 20th century one would garner .35-.40 cents per muskrat as reported in the Peterborough Examiner.

⁹ Interview with John "Jack" Simpson (1901-1988), 1984, Alderville.

Examiner for it built the excitement for weeks prior by giving daily accounts of entrants and their biographies, by involving local businesses and involving the public at every step of the way. By race day the roads were lined with people as the odds-makers plied their own trade giving the heads up on who the favourite was. At that time the Examiner published an evening edition so that one could scarcely be out of the loop as to what shape the race might take.

On race day Simpson jumped out fast and challenged his competitors, leading at some points along the route into Peterborough. He quickly grabbed the attention of the locals with his sturdy and natural gait, especially the eye of local YMCA trainer Dick Baker. As the 10 miles wound down and the runners entered George Street, Simpson and Peterborough locals Ray Best and Ernie Wilson fought for supremacy over the last mile. Simpson, not yet polished as a competitor but giving it his all, could not hold on to win but finished a close 3rd. With such a dramatic finish to a successful inaugural Examiner Road Race it was this race that would bring Dick Baker calling and a fascinating athletic career was born.

Marathon Running

Long-distance running had reached great heights by 1906 when Billy Sherring had captured the Athens Marathon. Sherring had been a great competitor from the Hamilton area, former winner of the Hamilton Herald Road Race, another one of those newspaper-sponsored events otherwise known as the "Around-the-Bay" race at over 19 miles. The Boston Marathon and the Hamilton race in fact were two of the



1907 - Second Place
Hamilton Herald Road Race

continent's greatest long-distance running events, and given that team sport had not yet evolved to take precedence over individual sports such as road racing, boxing, walking, and cycling so the hype around these latter events was large indeed. Babe Ruth had yet to take the field (not until 1914), and the New York Yankees were still years away from their glorious reign of baseball, America's great pastime. Hockey too was still in its team-based infancy, with the organization of the National Hockey League not occurring until 1917. And so there was lots of room to move for the single-handed athlete.

Fred Simpson was quickly brought into the YMCA Harriers Club by Dick Baker, and soon was put under a training plan with the aim of revitalizing the Harriers. Not far off in the distance, men such as Baker could already see that Canada would be lining up to defend Billy Sherring's great victory at the Athens Marathon.¹⁰ If the Olympic movement was to survive, and the Athens Games had helped to keep the flame burning, Canada would need a heavy roster of skilled athletes to compete and win against the world.

Baker wasted no time in getting his man into local races, at the Peterborough Armouries, and then in the following summer at Norwood and Lindsay. When Fred was not busy training he was busy tending to the fields for Thomas Taylor, or working the land in a traditional manner. Susan had become pregnant again in early 1907, which meant that soon they would have 4 young children to tend to. By the fall of that year Dick Baker had readied his man for the great Hamilton Herald Road Race, second in stature only to the Boston Marathon, which had been recently won by another young aboriginal up and comer named Tommy Longboat.

Hamilton

At Hamilton Fred Simpson had reached a level of road racing skill left only to a slim few. It was a tough sport, incredibly hard on a man's body, requiring a natural ability. Simpson's natural ability lie for the most part in who he was, a reflection of the warriors of the past, like the Ojibway messengers in the War of 1812 at Crysler's Farm for instance where Alderville's forefather's had been in alliance with the British against the

¹⁰ The modern Olympic movement had begun in 1896, but within the first 3 Olympiads, by 1904, the movement seemed in trouble. The 1906 Athens Games were aimed at revitalizing the movement, even though they did not follow the 4-year span between 'Olympiads.'

Americans. His skill was learned but his strength was natural, honed in the farm fields and the rice beds. Hamilton he had been prepared in order to put his name on the map. At Hamilton by this time Canada was already contemplating its role at the 1908 Olympic Games to be held in London, England, so that the stakes were very high on race day, October 31st.

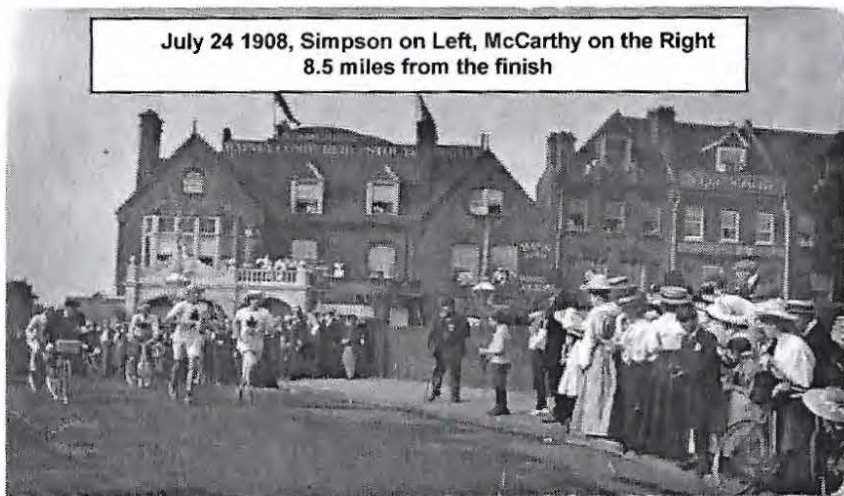
Simpson's showing at Hamilton was indeed credible. His challengers never truly threatened him other than the Irish-Canadian Tom Coley.¹¹ Simpson's strategy was to pace himself early and then eat up the competition down the road, which he did with such endurance, that he thought he passed all men and won. Unfortunately for Simpson it was Coley that won, but as a basic unknown and with an amazing second place finish it was *the Mississauga* whose name was flashed through the press as the one to look out for, and the one to possibly give Canada a chance at the London Olympics, and Tom Longboat.

1908

The almost strange thing about people like Simpson (and certainly Longboat) was their legal state of affairs as Indians but their acceptance by society as superior athletes and hopefuls for Canadian Olympic glory. Throughout the first half of 1908 Simpson worked his way through the ranks, trained at home, worked and raised the family with Susan, and must have surely read the numerous stories about how he was being touted as a possible Olympian. He worked on river drives up on the South River, honing his legs by working the logs. He would walk miles and run the back roads from Hiawatha to Peterborough, a distance of some 12 miles one way. There were still people alive and living in and around Peterborough in the late 1970s that remember him running the roads in training for London in 1908.¹² In May of '08 based on his now rising star, he was invited to compete in the provincial Olympic marathon trials in Toronto, in which he placed 4th. Shortly thereafter in early June he placed 4th again in the national Olympic trials winning a berth on the Canadian Olympic marathon team. By the latter part of June he was on a ship headed to London, England to take place in the 4th Olympiad. Unbeknownst to Simpson he would be a part of Olympic history in one of the most dramatic and gruelling tests of human endurance since the ancient games of Greece.

The Olympics

Canada fell far short of its expectations at London, relying heavily on both its First Nations marathoners, Fred Simpson and Tom Longboat. She sent 12 marathon runners on the team and over the weeks leading up to the great race the press was relentless in its coverage as the bookmakers made their daily calls on the athlete's odds eventually touting Simpson and Longboat as heavy favourites. The pressure must have been extremely great as the date of the race closed in. Fred Simpson would talk years later of the impressions that London had made on him, the great city that was not necessarily a stranger to the Mississauga



July 24 1908, Simpson on Left, McCarthy on the Right
8.5 miles from the finish

Ojibway, for John Sunday and Peter Jones had been there 70 years before making the case for aboriginal land rights to Queen Victoria and her high ranking men at the very place that Simpson would start his 26-mile trek into east London, Windsor Castle.

Windsor Castle had been chosen as the site for the start of the race, in order to give the Royal Family the pleasure of seeing the great race. Some 56 men from the nations of the world had made their way to the great city and castle. At race time at 2:30 pm on July 24th the heat and humidity was stifling as the runners made their way from the East Lawn. Captured on 16 mm film (the London games were the first Olympic

¹¹ Tom Coley, Irish Canadian Athletic Club (ICAC)

¹² Thomas Taylor's daughter (Mrs. Doris) to the writer by handwritten letter circa 1978-79 remembering as a young girl Fred pacing with her father, Thomas Taylor's horse and buggy to Peterborough.

be filmed) one can witness the start of this race and see Fred Simpson clearly at the pole position (front inside lane), which he had gained as odds on favourite. Behind him over the left of his shoulder one sees Longboat, a fascinating piece of early Canadian Olympic history. Back of them in the pack is Lewis Tewenina, the Hopi. Never again would three North American aboriginal marathon runners line up in the same Olympic Marathon.

England had it in her mind that she would win the gold medal, but was disappointed early in the race as the heat took its toll on her runners. In fact the heat was deadly and it established the pace very quickly causing the favourites to labour just as the lesser competitors did. Longboat, riding the wave of his Boston Marathon feat and one of the most respected entrants also laboured and at 19 miles was finished. But Simpson laboured on. Dark horses from South Africa and Italy soon came to the front and shocking all began their assault on the finish line. The Americans too made their move to the front so that as the runners neared Shepherd's Bush stadium all hopes of an English victory were dashed.



Dorando Pietri is assisted over the finish line.
July 24th, 1908, Shepherd's Bush

At the stadium little Dorando Pietri was first in but at first sight he was all but done in. His legs wobbled and he then became overcome with exhaustion to the point of collapse. In the crowd Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, creator of Sherlock Holmes, wrote of him as "little red legs" as he struggled against all odds to find the finish line. The crowd of 70,000 was stunned at the sight, and then British track-keepers ran to his aid and helped him up, only for him to collapse again. Four times he collapsed and four times he was helped up and all but dragged across the finish line in a British attempt to thwart an American victory. But it would be in vain for soon thereafter an American

Johnny Hayes had entered the stadium and crossed the finish line. The South African Charles Hefferon followed Hayes, then the Americans Foreshaw and Welton. The Americans quickly lodged a protest based on Pietri's having been assisted across. The Canadians then came in succession, Billy Wood, Fred Simpson and Harry Lawson. After the Americans won their protest Pietri was disqualified and officially Simpson was logged as the 6th place finisher. The American Hopi Lewis Tewenina would place 9th.

While Canadian officials lamented Canada's failure to win gold the ability of Simpson to place 6th and better Longboat and many of England's top runners was soon realized locally in Peterborough. He became a local hero and an influence on other young Mississauga men to enter athletics in and around the Peterborough area. The Peterborough Examiner quickly touted him "6th best distance runner in the world." Almost 80 years later his great feat of "beating Longboat" at London would be proudly remembered by his elderly children such as first born "Jack" and daughters Mae and Lucy. Today his legacy is recorded in the annals of early Canadian athletics.



Albert Smoke (Mississauga)
1920 Olympic Marathon



Tom Longboat (Onondaga)
1908 Olympic Marathon

The Later Years

Fred Simpson came back to Hiawatha where he and Susan raised up more children, seven in all with one dying in infancy. Eventually the clouds of war shadowed the world and like all corners of Canada so too was Hiawatha and Alderville effected. His brother Archie of Alderville was killed in 1917, as were 8 other men from that small reserve. Fred and Susan made their way back to Alderville in the early 1920s after their children were older, coming across the ice with horse and sleigh. Life in Alderville remained heavily burdened by the colonial attitudes that had shaped the Department during the 19th century, so that great feats like Simpson's did not equate to anything serious in a monetary sense.

He had even turned professional between 1909 and 1912 racing in Georgia, New York, New Jersey, Montreal, Chicago, Fort William but any winnings were used quickly on helping the family survive. Racist attitudes did not make it easy for him as a professional, what with the likes of the first black Heavyweight Champion Jack Johnson raising the fears and hatred of white Americans all at the same time. *Jim Crow* was vehemently opposed to a man like Johnson flaunting himself in front of white America and would chase him out of the country (Johnson's talent was a frustrating matter in itself for white America). Geronimo had died in 1907 so that being Indian and flaunting it probably wasn't going to gain a man like Simpson any points in the public arena. He had to go on talent and endurance alone. A favourite during the Olympic craze, Simpson faced new levels of discrimination as a professional.

At Alderville Fred Simpson lived out his years as grandfather, father, provider, staunch Ojibway, and former Olympian and professional athlete. He saw the last great Mississauga land surrender take place in 1923, known as the Williams Treaty, and probably knew some of the young children who were being taken away by the Indian Agent to far off residential schools at Muncey and Chapleau, a continuing reminder of colonialism at its worst. He would have seen the last of the rice harvests take place in Rice Lake toward the end of the 1930s and early 1940s. He would not see the reins of the government loosened in his lifetime. Fred Simpson passed away in Alderville on May 19th, 1945. Tom Longboat passed away a year later.

The Indian Act was eventually but only slightly amended in 1951, with Indians not gaining the franchise until 1960. Not until 1967 would the Indian Agent depart Alderville ushering in a slow and frustrating period of the devolution of local authority. It would be another 25 years before any serious capital and infrastructure change would occur in Alderville First Nation.

ONTARIO REGENCY COTTAGE AT 8186 McBRIDE ROAD, RR6, COBOURG, ON K9A 4J9

By the home's owners, Diana and John Joynt

The regency cottage house style originated in India. British army personnel stationed there replicated the style in other countries where they eventually settled. Today regency cottages are found in Australia, particularly Tasmania, the Caribbean Islands and the southern USA where it is often referred to as a Louisiana Plantation House.

A regency cottage has four defining characteristics:

1. They are bungalows with hip roofs.
2. They are approximately square.
3. They are squat to the ground with only one step from grade to entrance.
4. The roof extends in a straight line past the walls of the house and becomes the roof of an encircling veranda.

The purpose of the veranda is to keep the house cooler in summer and warmer in winter. In summer when the sun is high in the sky, the veranda blocks the sun from shining into the house. In winter, when the sun is low in the sky it shines under the veranda into the house for warmth. As well, some regency cottages have a belvedere which is a five to ten foot square structure inset into the centre of the roof and protruding three or four feet above it with almost continuous windows on all four sides. This provides small upstairs bedrooms.



Our home was originally built in the 1830s (1837 as near as we can determine) on the southwest corner of what is now Rogers Road and Elgin Street (Highway 2) in Cobourg, a site now occupied by a Canadian Tire Store. In April 1994 we purchased the house from Chris Campbell, who lived in Colborne at the time but now lives in Trenton, who was disassembling it. The property owner had given Chris until September 1994 to have it off the site. We didn't buy our 8186 McBride Road property until February 2005 and didn't start reconstruction until April 2005 so from September 1994 until April 2005 we stored our house in a rented tractor-trailer.



The footprint of the house is 50' X 43' without the veranda and 66' X 59' with it. The house is a centre hall plan. Originally there were five bedrooms, a dining room and a parlour on the main floor. Two bedrooms were to the right of the front door off the centre hall. The parlour and dining room were on the left. The three remaining bedrooms were across the back of the house, accessed by a hall at right angles to the centre hall. The kitchen was in the dirt floor cellar, which, except for the kitchen area, was a crawl space. Food was prepared on a cooking fireplace with brick ovens at each end and brought to the main floor by a staircase in the front centre hall.



The house was primarily used as a residence except for a brief period in the 1980s when it was a restaurant. When we purchased it, the two bedrooms on right of the centre hall had been made into one large living room. One of bedrooms across the back was the kitchen and a bathroom had been installed in the back hall. As well the staircase in the centre hall had been removed and replaced with a trap door staircase in the kitchen. The surrounding veranda had been removed. There were two working fireplaces, one in the parlour and one in the living room. The kitchen fireplace used for cooking in the cellar was not operable.



We replaced the middle of the bedrooms across the back with a bathroom, removed the existing bathroom and put the stairs to the lower level in the back hall. The third bedroom across the back of the house remains. We rebuilt the fireplace in the parlour and added one in the dining room back to back with it. We rebuilt the one in the living room and rebuilt the cellar kitchen-cooking fireplace into our kitchen but with only one brick oven. All fireplaces are the Rumford design. We excavated a downstairs walk out along the left side of the house and have three bedrooms, a cold storage, laundry room, bathroom, and TV room in this lower level. This area is not visible from the front of the house so the overall look of a regency cottage is preserved. The only other change we made to the original house was to add a second window on each side of the front door so we now have four windows across the front instead of two. In total we have approximately 4,000 square feet of living space on the two floors.

There are fifteen windows and a front and back outside door on the main floor. Downstairs there are four windows and one outside door. All windows are twelve over twelve and each pane is old glass. Each frame and sash is original or reproduced to original. On the main floor, all trims and moldings are original or reproduced to original.

Downstairs, all trim, moldings, window sash and frames have been salvaged from old homes. The floors are pine and are original to the house or are matching pine floors salvaged from other old houses. The main floor doors are six panel. Two are original to the house. The remainder are salvaged equivalents.



REMEMBERING: LIFE AS A WREN

By Frances Gage

Thank you...I will try to speak until I see someone drifting off – then it will be time to wind things up. The late Jennings Young, who was a member of the Arts & Letters Club used to relate a story of the late A.Y. Jackson, who was a very lengthy after dinner speaker, to the club. A.Y. was profoundly deaf, and he spoke on and on until some of the members were falling asleep in their mashed potatoes. Finally, someone placed a piece of paper beside his plate. A.Y. read it and promptly sat down. The message was "Your fly is open". We don't have mashed potatoes so we should not have that problem.

On Remembrance Day, the C.B.C played Benjamin Britten's War Requiem. You may not like Britten but its message is clear – "We must not allow such insanity to be repeated!" We must, also, stop our war on this planet, our only home, our war with pollutants, even if it means blowing the whistle on neighbours and landlords who still use herbicides and pesticides. Ants and dandelions have their places. There was a famous potter from Kyoto, giving a workshop in Waterloo. When he was put his plane for Japan, he was asked, "What is your best impression of Ontario?" He replied "The little yellow flowers which bloom in the lawns."

Enough sermonizing from me! I remember 'W5608S' as I slammed my hat on the table in front of the Paymaster for my dollar a day, which, miraculously became \$1.75, but more of that later. There were about 6000 women at the W.R.E.N.s – named after the British Wrens. As you can tell by the number, I was one of the last drafts – though we were not drafted, we volunteered. I was right out of High School (Grade 13 in those days). As a typical teenager, I wanted to study music, art, and medicine, all three, all at once. Being in the Navy made me realize that a choice of direction had to be made. There was sort of security for a young person. We were told when to arise, when to sleep, what to wear and whether or not we liked it, what to do. Basic training for all Wrens was in Galt, HMCS Conestoga.

All establishments were treated as ships. At first it was difficult to talk about decks as floors, bulkheads (walls), heads (washrooms), galleys (kitchens), messes (dining rooms) and sick bays (hospitals). There was daily inspection of living quarters. We stood to attention beside our bunks, as an Officer made the 'rounds'. One of our officers had a dachshund name "Trilby" (also the name of a headgear). If Trilby emerged from under a bunk with dust on her nose, penalties were issued. These might have been peeling mountains of potatoes in the galley or swabbing decks.

Many amusing things and some scary things happened. At St. Hyacinthe, a huge base, the bugler rode around on a bicycle. He would come right into our barracks to blow his bugle. One morning someone put a pail of water over the door. He doused himself. He was not amused, but no one was the culprit! Also at St. Hyacinthe, we were lined up for morning Divisions – a sort of prayer service. We had all been given shots and we hurt. The chaplain seemed only know two hymns. As we started in on "Breathe on me Breath of God" a Wren keeled over. The girl beside me said "Well you didn't need to blow her over!" We took turns sitting watch at night and would go into the mess for sandwiches and hot chocolate. What a shock on turning on the light, armies of cockroaches, some as long as three inches, with varnished amber bodies, would scurry out of the light. We still ate at that Mess.

There was a British officer in charge for a while. One morning he rushed into the Mess, shouting "If you filthy Colonial ratings want your damned breakfast, eat it on the run". He was not popular. In some areas, we wore bellbottom trousers. For example at Gloucester we had to snowshoe a mile to the D/F shack but the story is that an Admiral went into the plotting room where the wrens were on ladders pinpointing positions of naval craft. He said "Either you have to move the fleet to the South Pacific, or put these girls into trousers."

Towards the end of the Japanese campaign a few of us were moved from the West coast to HMCS Gloucester. Our officer did not want to be demobilized, so she gave us jobs as cooks and waitresses, to serve a draft of British sailors who had come for training. This did not amuse us – who had been working in the Intelligence, so, late one night, we hatched a plan. We went to work, pretending that we were from a psyche ward. The sailors were mystified. Heard one say "Blimey, crazy Wrens in the mess." The officer could not comment. We were removed from this duty and subsequently discharged. Fifteen of us were put on loan to the American Navy at Bainbridge Island, near Seattle (Seattle was head of the Pacific network). Four of us met some cool American sailors at a dance. These boys invited us to see the shipyards. One ship, the New Jersey was in for a refit. They had served on her. We entered the shipyard by our station boat and spent hours touring the New Jersey, Missouri, the badly damaged Bunker Hill and other aircraft carriers. It is hard to describe the feeling of standing on the deck and looking up, forever, at the super structure – truly awesome. But, we overstayed our time and went out by a different exit. Suddenly I was grabbed by a bushy mustached Marine who said "Who the blank are you and how did you get here." We were arrested as spies and taken, by the F.B.I. all over the yard to each place we had been. After four hours in the sweltering heat, they were persuaded to call our American officer (They did not know that there were women in the Canadian Navy, or even if we had a Navy), and we were freed. As we were leaving a Marine said "How did you girls get in?" At the end of her tether, a friend replied, "We swam in." That almost was a re-arrest! There was an investigation...after all we had marched in the July 4th parade with a special place for foreign troops.

When Canadian troops were shipped anywhere, the Railway got some old, old trains out of mothballs. We were on one of these – gas-lit, and discovered it was full of mice. At one stop, sailors bought mousetraps and hung the trophies across the cars by their tails. Conductors were not amused. But what was I doing, when we were not up to these antics?

At basic training, in Galt, we were separated into categories – cooks, stewards, sick berth attendants and communications. I was put into the latter group to be a Visual Signaller, or a Wireless Telegrapher and was finally put into W/T because of a good sense of rhythm. About 25 of us were sent to St. Hyacinthe, PQ, a base of about 7000 men and 600 Wrens! We had to learn to type and to receive Morse code through headsets. The messages would then be gathered and sent away. One NCO could take in a message at 60 wpm while carrying on a separate conversation. It never got that automatic with me. After training we were shipped to HMCS Gloucester, near Ottawa. It was nearing the end of the German campaign. When not in the main Operations building, we took shifts in a tiny D/F shack (direction finding). Here we had machines that were similar to but preceding radar. We were constantly searching for German broadcasts. When one was received its position was noted and if three positions were gotten there was what was called 'a fix' and the sender would be hunted down. One stroke of British luck was the capture of some German log books, which should have been destroyed by a sinking U-boat. This gave us the radio frequencies to search. We celebrated VE day, by 'splicing the main brace' and being issued one bottle of beer each.

After the end of the German War, fifteen of us were sent to Ottawa to be retrained for the Japanese Conflict. We learned some very basic Japanese and typed our messages on Kata Kana typewriters. We were called Kata Kana Wrens. The operation was so secret that even we did not know why we got an extra 75 cents a day. The typewriters could not leave the base so two of us were taught to repair them. It is a skill I have never had to use again. Most incoming messages were in code, but the occasional emergency was in Japanese. We could read "Enemy aircraft, subs, ships, attacking, etc." There was a huge difference between German and Japanese transmissions. Germans, with their musical backgrounds had what was called 'beautiful fists'. Transmissions were rhythmic. They broke radar silence for just a few moments, then 'went down.' The Japanese, in contrast, were erratic. One sender would annoy another, and there would be a little fight, which would go on long enough that a 'fix' would be obtained, with often tragic consequences. As you know the bomb ended that war precipitously.

One strange and scary event remains with me. On watch, one night, I tracked a strange something across the Prairies. It was a "beep, beep, beep." and so strange. Later, it turned out to have been a balloon 30' wide, equipped with a transmitter and sometimes incendiary bombs, to supposedly test air currents.

Another memory, I recall, with a sort of horror, is of a U.S. ship unloading Hong Kong P.O.Ws at Victoria. A few were marching, many on stretchers, some still in uniform, all skeletal. We celebrated VE Day by again 'splicing the main brace' then were put to work doing documents, awaiting discharge. Then we returned to Gloucester. What a terrible, tragic thing is war. This is the end of my meanderings. Thank you for your patience.

COTTESMORE HALL

By

Stephen Straughan

At the Meeting on Tuesday, January 23, our guest, Stephen Straughan, spoke about the history of Cottesmore Hall from 1907 to 1974. Stephan gave an excellent PowerPoint presentation and commentary. He had about 100 century old photos of the Hall and of the family of Wallace H. Rowe, a Pittsburgh industrialist who built the largest summer home ever in Cobourg. The mansion and land occupied 15 acres at the corner of Cottesmore Ave. and King St. East.

The photos and tape of one of the Rowe sisters talking about their growing up in Cobourg, along with Stephen's commentary, gave great detail and richness to the picture of life in Cobourg, especially in the early 1900's. The Ontario Government expropriated this property in the 1970's to turn it into a home for wayward girls. In 1974 it was demolished, along with two other neighbouring mansions.



Picture courtesy of 'Cobourg Images',
Cobourg Public Library

THE BLACK PIONEERS OF COBOURG AND AREA

By
Karen Walker

The earliest Black Canadians came to New France as slaves in the early 17th century. The first individual to be recorded was a seven-year-old boy kidnapped from the east African island of Madagascar and sold in Quebec City in 1632. In the long, tragic history of slavery - a history that has forgotten the identity and suffering of so many - we at least know the name of this child. He was called Olivier Le Jeune by his French masters. There remained relatively few Black men and women in Canada for a century after Olivier.

In the 1760s with the arrival of the forces of General James Wolfe, came more Black pioneers to Canada. Likely purchased in the Caribbean or in the American colonies, they were brought north as the personal servants of the British commanding officers. As the British took up posts in Quebec, the demand for slaves increased. In 1763, General James Murray asked a friend in New York to buy several men for him, complaining that he could find no decent servants among the French. So that his new slaves would be happy in this new land, Murray also requested for each a clean, young wife. Once in the province, Black slaves were sold to British and French alike for wheat, horses as well as cash and even offered as security for loans.

Beyond old Quebec, Black immigration came to Upper Canada from the United States in the later 18th century, at the time of the American Revolution. Many arrived here as slaves, but there was now - for the first time - a significant number of freeman settling in Canada. They were among the estimated eight to ten thousand men, women and children who reached British lines during the war, having been promised liberty by Cornwallis if they left their American masters. These Black Loyalists eventually found themselves on the losing end of the American Revolution and came north. Before they left, some fought alongside the British in Loyalist brigades. The most famous of these soldiers were the twelve African and American born men who served in Butler's Rangers in the early 1780s.

Outnumbering these freemen were those brought to Upper Canada as slaves. Often finding it difficult, even dangerous to attempt to leave the U.S. with valuable possessions, Loyalists saw servants confiscated or kidnapped in midnight raids by rebel neighbours. Those who were able to keep their slaves found more trouble at the border. Masters who wished to import servants into Upper Canada had to pay a tax of forty shillings per person. Like furniture or china, these men and women were classified as luxury household goods. In this rough new land, Black servants were status symbols kept mainly for housework and personal service. In even the richest households, there were usually no more than four or five. Such had become the custom in the northern U.S. where there were many more Black maids and butlers than fieldworkers as in the old South.

The largest number of slaves in Upper Canada were in the fine households between Belleville and Kingston. Here lived the region's wealthiest merchants as well as some of Northumberland's earliest government officials. Hazelton Spencer, who represented our county in the provincial legislature in the early 1790s kept at his home in Belleville, a slave woman named Violet and her daughter Francis. There was also Timothy Thompson, one of Northumberland's first judges. Tending to his rambling estate near Kingston were people named Richard, Pomp and Nelly.

The slave trade in Upper Canada grew freely until 1793 when the first official step towards abolition was passed. John Graves Simcoe had spearheaded a strong anti-slavery bill, but in the face of stiff opposition from Spencer and other slaveholders, this bill soon became a compromise. The law that finally passed did not emancipate the slaves of Upper Canada, but it did forbid their further importation. It also declared that all slave children born in the province would be free upon their twenty-fifth birthday.

In 1798, five years after Simcoe's law, Cobourg was founded. The Nickerson, Burnham, Herriman, Bates, Shaw, White, Buck and Jones families received Loyalist land grants here and built their farms and

homes into two villages, Hamilton and Amherst. By 1814, the community had several mills, at least one inn, a dozen assorted shops and stores, and even a district courthouse. The population had reached about three hundred souls when in about 1820, Hamilton and Amherst joined together and named themselves Cobourg.

The first known Black pioneer of Cobourg and area came during these early days. Young, like the community itself, he was a fourteen-year-old slave boy named Tom.

What we know about Tom comes from a rare document preserved by and later sadly lost from The Lennox and Addington Historical Society in Napanee. To record the sale of this child in March 1824 his then master Eli Keeler of Haldimand Township drew up an agreement or 'assignment'. It tells that Tom was born in Upper Canada in 1809. His mother – her name unknown – would have arrived here before 1793 or have been born here herself. Tom was a 'mulatto', one of the many children born to a slave woman and her master. Likely regarded as an expensive investment (sold for \$75, roughly twice the price of building a modest cabin) by his new master William Bell of Thurlow Township, Tom had been learning an unspecified trade under Keeler.

Standing as he was at the end of the history of slavery in Canada, Tom of Haldimand Township would have been freed when he turned 25 years of age in 1834. Slavery itself did not last even that long. It was abolished throughout the British Empire on August 1, 1833.

In 1832, Cobourg had about one thousand people. Within five years, there were more than three thousand. This population was swelling in more than just numbers. It was bringing to our region a new ethnic and religious diversity not seen here before. Englishmen and Church of England members remained the majority in town, but their numbers were being challenged. Many more Irishmen, Quebecois, Americans, and continental Europeans, particularly Germans, were settling here and more Methodists and Catholics too.

Moses Carter was one of the very many new to town in the 1830s and he was one of those who did not fit the old mould. Carter was a Black American, quite possibly a runaway slave. By 1840, the man was well established in Cobourg and, even if he did not say so himself, his prospects seemed bright. Carter had opened a little grocery near College and King Streets and was living comfortably in an apartment above the store. His good fortune continued when he met Ellen Hare, a young woman of English birth who worked locally as a servant. On Thursday June 13, 1841, Moses and Ellen were married at St. Peter's Church.

One summer night not long after the marriage, several men gathered at a local tavern and talked about Moses Carter. They were overheard swearing at how a Black man could have the impudence to open a store here and now, even marry a white woman. A chivaree, they said, would teach him and any other upstarts a lesson. Eight young men appeared at the Carters' door late that evening. The mob yelled to Moses to show himself and when he did not, they broke into the grocery and smashed the goods inside. The attackers then charged up the stairs to the apartment. The men dragged the terrified couple down to the street. Moses was beaten and kicked on his own doorstep and Ellen raped as she cried for mercy.

In the June 30th Cobourg Star, the attack was called "...a most horrible and wicked outrage..." perpetrated by "...anti-abolitionists...". Local people collected money to help Moses Carter restock his store. Some also heaped blame on the town's newly formed Board of Police for not having caught the attackers before they fled the area. As there was no work of the incident at the next court session held in October 1841, it is unclear whether anyone ever faced any real justice for this crime. By the next year, the Carters had left town. They do not appear in the 1842 census of Cobourg.

In the late 1840s, Black residents included William Waddell, Brothers George and William Alexander, Warren Rush, and the Yorks. They were like Moses Carter – ambitious and confident – but having come after his tragic experience and whatever it may have taught Cobourg, these new men ultimately lived the life that Carter was denied.

In 1848, William Waddell started a barbering and hairdressing parlour called "The Cobourg Baths". It stood near King and Division Streets. William Alexander also began as a local barber before turning

innkeeper with his brother George. They owned "The Albert Hall and Concert Rooms" on King Street East and later "The Alexander House Hotel" along Division near the harbour. Further up the street was Warren Rush's grocery store. In 1872, he introduced the town to such novelties as bananas and oranges. William Waddell, the Alexanders and Warren Rush had more in common with Moses Carter than just business vision. They too married local women of English and Irish descent. It all, no doubt, continued to raise eyebrows and plenty of comments, but, as far as we know, these couples were left in peace.

Another clan of the 1840s was the York family. The patriarch of the Yorks of Cobourg was Thomas York Sr. According to his 1848 obituary in the Cobourg Star (he died at the great age of 105!!) this man lived an extraordinarily historic life, one that takes us back to the roots of Canadian Black history.

Apparently born a slave in America or in the Caribbean – or perhaps even captured in west Africa as a child – Thomas York came to Canada in the year 1759 at about age 16. He was then the servant of a British soldier invading Quebec with General Wolfe. In later years, Thomas recalled that he was present at the Battle of the Plains of Abraham. York remained in Quebec after the British conquest. There he would have been freed by the early 19th century when slavery in Lower Canada was undone by several landmark legal cases. Soon after, York married a Black woman named Mary Macloud and in 1801 they had a son, Thomas Jr. In the early 1820s, Thomas Sr., Mary and their son, and a second son or nephew William left Quebec for Upper Canada. They came to Cobourg in about 1844.

The York family put down deep roots in our old town. Young William soon found a wife and in 1846 married at the Wesleyan Methodist Church, now Trinity United. William then opened a barber shop he called "The Crystal Palace". In 1857, a bath there cost a patron 90 cents and a haircut 15 cents. The Crystal Palace eventually expanded to feature fancy goods, such as hair ornaments, perfume, musical instruments, and sheet music. Over the next sixty years or so, many of William and Margaret's nine children worked in the family store at King and Division. By the turn of the 20th century, daughters Carrie, Fannie and Maggie had turned York's to selling toys and then tobacco goods. "Woody's", which stands on the site today, is a descendant of the York's old store.

The William York family also owned a good deal of local real estate. Soon after arriving in town, they bought land along King Street East. The family later had a stone cottage and a frame house at Chapel and College. There was also a duplex further east along Chapel, another on Swayne and a house on Ball Street.

For more than fifty years, the Yorks were active in their community. The family belonged to Trinity United and regularly attended church and charity events. William himself was a strong Liberal in his politics and signed his name to nominate candidates in various early elections. Son Donald, like many eager young men, was a volunteer fireman in the 1880s.

During the 1850s, an infamous American law and a famous secret society greatly increased Black immigration to Canada West. Tens of thousands of escaped southern slaves who had found freedom in the northern U.S. were forced to flee north once again, this time from the American Fugitive Slave Law. This act allowed slave-catchers to seize runaways anywhere, even in the North. Man-hunters sometimes pursued individuals who had been emancipated and even kidnapped those who were freeborn. Helping men and women to escape the South and evade the slave-catcher was the Underground Railway. Between 1840 and 1865, this shadowy organization hid, fed, and spirited away to Canada more than thirty thousand people. One of the railway's favorite routes to freedom were the steamers that traveled Lake Ontario from Oswego and Rochester to north shore ports including Cobourg and Port Hope.

As elsewhere in the province, the Black population of Northumberland peaked in the 1850s. Newcomers included Charles Martin, William Wright, and several extended families. One were the Lonsberrys –William and Hannah, their son David, his wife Maria, and their twelve children. Another large clan was the Hornbacks. Peter and Elizabeth came with their sons Gardiner, Simon and James, who brought their own families too. There were also the Robinsons, Huffmans, Taylors and the Dickins. They all settled in Cobourg.

This era also saw a general movement of Black pioneers out beyond Cobourg itself. John Bell, James Hill, and Isaiah Butler lived in Hamilton Township while Thomas Hill, Benjamin Buck, Henry Bird, John Williams, and the Brown family arrived in Haldimand. Edward Berry settled in Port Hope as did Joshua Johnson, Joseph Sipples and Perry and Margaret Moore. Unlike an earlier generation of Black settlers who founded several businesses, most of the immigrants of the 1850s worked here as labourers and a few as farmers. There were also skilled tradesmen, including blacksmiths, shoemakers, carpenters, printer, dressmakers and tailors as well as a mason and a telegraph operator.

Just as the coming of Black settlers to our area in the 1840s and 1850s mirrored the region's boomtown days, the decline of the Black community in the late 19th century reflected the hard times that had come to town.

There were many strikes against Cobourg in the early 1860s. Down at the harbour – long the community's lifeblood – business was slowing. Immigration was dropping. The waves of newcomers that had fed and grown the local economy for decades now began to roll ever westward, past Northumberland to other ports further along the lake. Our area's time in this progression had come and was now largely gone.

Furthering the harbour's decline was the coming of the cross-country Grand Trunk Railway in October 1857. Goods and passengers were now traveling quicker and cheaper and in increasing numbers on the rails rather than by ship.

And if things were bad at the lake, it was no better uptown. The final bill for Victoria Hall, that proud symbol of local ambition, had just arrived. In the end, Victoria Hall cast a staggering \$110,000. A sum that took the town nearly seventy years to pay. That enormous debt soon became piled upon the painful failure of our own Cobourg-Peterborough Railway. Its fortunes finally sank when the bridge across Rice Lake collapsed for the last time during the bitter winter of 1861.

Apart from these poor times, the decline of Northumberland's Black settlers can also be linked to momentous events happening across Lake Ontario. In April 1861, the American Civil War began. Black men who had come to Canada West years earlier, many fleeing slavery and the Fugitive Slave Law, were now drawn back to the U.S. They returned lured by the prospect of the end of slavery and in 1863 by the extraordinary opportunity to fight for freedom in the Union armies.

By the turn of the 20th century, most of our Black pioneers were gone. William and Thomas York, William and George Alexander, Warren Rush, and William Waddell – all successful merchants of decades past – had died. After they gone, their families closed their old shops and stores and themselves left town. The Yorks, Lonsberrys and Hornbacks were among the relatively few who remained here into more recent times.

To bring this story of Cobourg and area's Black pioneers to a close, a few words should be devoted to a local man who did much to preserve Canadian Black history. He was William Riddell, a Justice of the Supreme Court of Ontario from 1925 to 1945. Born in Hamilton Township, Riddell was distinguished lawyer and judge as well an avid historian. One of his most important works was a comprehensive study of the Black settlers of early Canada. Originally published in 1920, this work is still an important source on the subject today. Riddell took more than just an academic interest in Black Canadians. In the 1920s, he served on the Board of Directors of the Canadian League for the Advancement of Coloured People, an early organization that pioneered civil rights for all.

TIME

By

John Jolie

I look at my watch...its 11:30 – that's good. It took me 14 minutes to get here from home. You know, it's getting longer now as Scarborough is spreading out and is filling up every nook and cranny around here. I met a friend for lunch at 11:47 yesterday. I was ten minutes late. The power went off yesterday for a few minutes, so my clocks were wrong. It drives me nuts to go around the house and adjust all those clocks again! I have watched the clock in my van flash the wrong time for five years. Finally I fixed that problem - I bought another vehicle. If my kids did not keep up on all of this time stuff, I'd be in deep trouble.

Time – hey! By some coincidence, that's the title of my talk today, It is hard to imagine a period in the past when the actual minute and hour of the day was not very important.

We don't have to travel back to the days of the sundial to find that people once had a different idea about time. Only a few generations ago, clocks and watches were the prized possessions of only the wealthy. It is incredible to think that today's cheap watches, costing just a few dollars, are far more accurate than the most expensive timepieces of a century ago.

You know, that poses a question: If people did not have the money to possess a watch or clocks, how did they know what the time was? Well, there was no real science to it. It was their stomachs that told them! Now, all of us learned in school that astronomically, it was noon when the sun was directly south and at its highest point in the sky. That, of course, was lunchtime! That's what we learned in school, right? But, seriously, who would spend their time waiting and watching for that moment of high noon? Have you ever heard of anyone shouting "Eureka!" "I've been watching the sun and it is now past its high point. I figure that it must have been noon about a half an hour ago!"

A cloudy day would give people like that an ulcer! Even if one was ever in a position to know that exact moment, that little bit of knowledge only applied to people who were living along that longitude. It was impossible to have solar noon occur at the same moment at both Brighton and Port Hope, because the sun has to be directly south of the observer. Time wise, we have the same hour as Lima, Peru or Havana, Cuba. In fact, as far as time is concerned, we have more in common with those Latin cities, time wise, than we do with either Halifax or Winnipeg.

So, I repeat... 'Time for lunch' or 'time for dinner' was often the only time that many people needed to live by. Today, we use Eastern Standard Time, but back then, it was stomach time. Things changed when group work became more important than individual efforts. Being 'on time' suddenly became important. This also caused a shift in the way people were paid. Before, people would be paid for completing a job. After clocks appeared, it became the custom to be paid by the hour – something that couldn't be done before. Until clocks started to run our lives, no one had the job of determining the time. It would be some self appointed, local big shot would pronounce the hour, when it suited his needs. It may have been the church minister, a foreman or the stagecoach operator, sounding his horn as he came into town.

'So really', you persist, 'What time was it?' In the 1830's, Port Hope merchant Richard Barrett had a clock over his shop door and everyone used his timepiece as the reference point. By default, he became Port Hope's timekeeper! Barrett's clock was so vital that the Port Hope council remitted his taxes if his clock remained 'in working order and gave accurate time!' And, how did they know it gave accurate time? They had no choice but to check Barrett's clock!

The first clock in Cobourg may have been at the Grand Trunk station. That clock served train travelers, but the whole town made use of them. The Cobourg station clock predated Victoria Hall's clock by a few years. Now, the telegraph line ran through our towns a few years earlier. That would be great for synchronizing time between towns, but it was difficult to use it to get the time, because everyone had different times! What was the standard?

In Port Hope, the first telephone line ran from the train station to a hotel, downtown. The telephone provided instant communications, but what could one say: What time do the clocks in Oshawa read? ... in Millbrook? There was no standard of comparison. Everyone had the right time, as far as they were concerned.

Let us stay with the railways for a moment. Trains changed people's lives, forever. There is no question that trains made the country and the world accessible to us. However, railroads did something else. Trains regulated our lives! Almost all people around this area still lacked timepieces. Ponder this thought: trains delivered people and freight, but they also delivered the time! Here and everywhere else, the time displayed at the train station time was the standard by which all town clocks, church bells, factory whistles and school bells were now set. The further away one was from a train track, the less important it was to know the 'real' time. What time was it on the farm? The answer was, simply, who cared? The village of Keene, on the north shore of Rice Lake did not have a train line. However, they still wanted to impress visitors. The clock tower on their township hall had four clocks, one for each side. Each clock had a different time on display – the hands of the clock were painted on!

Until the Grand Trunk came, Cobourg and Port Hope each had their own times back then, but that difference did not matter to anyone. In Port Hope and Cobourg, our town hall clock bells became the 'alarm clocks' for the local population. In Cobourg, the first bell rang at 6 am. In Port Hope it was a more civilized 7 am. Those bells began to regulate our lives. That was one job the building's caretaker had to undertake. His family lived in those buildings.

As the decades passed, our town clocks became less important. Eventually these clock bells became more of an annoyance than a necessity. Everyone now had his or her own timepieces. Into the 1930's the radio could tell us the time. Some citizens started to petition that the town clocks should not be waking them any longer. (That reminds me of train horns, more recently)

Today, knowing the time requires little effort and no one gives much thought to it. However, in the nineteenth century, figuring out the time was possibly the most difficult problem around. People could go through life and not understand electricity, chemistry or physics – and all of that didn't matter...but time, it affected everyone, every day!

Time was a worldwide problem. The longitude was needed. Finding the latitude was easy because the North Star, Polaris could give one an easy fix on our latitude. Sailors lived in constant fear because they did not have an accurate fix on the longitude they were at and they needed to know where they were. (Longitude is what determines time zones) Even one of Captain Cook's Pacific voyages had, as a priority, to observe the transit of Venus across the face of the Sun. Believe it or not, this observation was little more than an attempt to measure time in a different part of the world. One critical job that observatories had and still have was to use astronomy to calculate time.

The problems of telling time while sailors were at sea certainly was difficult. However, knowing the correct time had now become a land problem when trains began to move people at unprecedented speeds. Now, everyone had to know what the real (i.e. train) time was. Catching a train meant that one had to know the time that the train was coming – the old standard of 'before lunch' just wasn't good enough, any more. Now, it simply wasn't a matter of being late for school or church - it could also be a matter of life and death. Trains had to be on time because of safety. Initially, most rail lines had single tracks, with numerous sidings put in for passing. Everyone had to know the schedule when trains were on the move. One can look at a local example. The Prince Albert Viaduct over the Ganaraska held a single track. Breakdowns, tardiness, darkness and fog all disrupted train schedules, and interruptions like those created many calamities on railroads right across the continent. Time - the railways just could not be complacent about it! Luckily, our area was spared such disasters.

So, this confusion forced railroads to establish their own time and time zones. Every train line did! At rail junctions, the train stations would display several clocks, each showing different railroad times. The Buffalo station had three clocks on display, showing Albany time, Columbus and Buffalo time. Having a display of

three city clocks would have been an irritant, but can you imagine being at the station in St. Louis, Missouri? That train station had six different times on display!

Our east-west train, the Grand Trunk, also had its own time zone boundaries. Starting in Portland, Maine, the company used Portland Time from the Atlantic to Island Pond, a village in the northern corner of Vermont. From Island Pond (which prides itself on being the site of the world's first time zone line) Montreal Time took over. That time stretched all the way to Toronto. Toronto Time ran from there to Sarnia. Chicago Time was the official time zone from there. Remember, every rail line made their own times. This was complicated, but it became even worse because all towns along the tracks kept their own clocks, too, including both Port Hope and Cobourg! An attempt by Port Hope to move to Montreal Time in 1857 resulted in protests! The Port Hope clock was about 39 minutes behind Montreal! (Craik 39) Now, remember that the Grand Trunk had only arrived a few months earlier. It had never been a problem until then.

Okay, so each train company set the time. So what's the problem, you say? A lot, I say! The Grand Trunk ran through Port Hope, on Grand Trunk Time. The Midland Railway ran north, with their time. The Midland railway was connected to the CPR line in Lindsay, where Toronto Time was in use! Still wanting to be masters of their own destiny, Port Hope had their own local town time, displayed on their municipal clock, as well.

That brings to mind a song about the Port Hope train schedules that I heard once: I hear the train a coming, rolling round the bend. I ain't seen the sunshine since I don't know when. I've been stuck at the Midland Station, but I was using Grand Trunk Time. The town clock tells me I'm still early – I think I'll lose my mind! I think Johnny Cash missed an opportunity to have a gold record!

Our neighbours to the north in Peterborough had the same problems. When the city was set to adjust their town's time on November 5th, 1883, there were complaints. However, those grumblings were met with scorn – something to the effect that everyone knew that the time showing on the Peterborough clock was wrong more times than when it was right.

As far as time zones are concerned, we tend to give all of the credit to Sandford Fleming. He was the instrument to get the world to change to standard time, but a few Americans had persuaded some American train lines to adapt to some uniformity. However, despite the fact that their ideas preceded Fleming, their plans were only for trains.

Sandford Fleming, the Scottish Canadian, was the global thinker. Under his guidance, the world experts agreed to a plan. The world was divided into 24 time zones, 15 degrees of longitude each. Crossing one zone would cause one to be an hour earlier, if one was going west or later if one was traveling east. These Universal time zones came into effect on November 18th, 1883. Clocks were stopped at midday and adjusted to the new times. This date became known worldwide, as the 'Day of Two Noons'. For a short time, some spoke of the old time as 'God's time' as opposed to man's time. Greenwich, England became the prime meridian for the world, where degrees of longitude start. Now England had been using that line running through Greenwich for years, but other countries had clung to their own prime meridians. This move to standard time zones took several years and most of Fleming's straight lines have been adjusted for political and practical reasons. Here, time zones caused considerable comment at the time, and not all of it was positive. The Cobourg World wrote that a precise measurement had been calculated near Cornwall. It was to be the basis for the determination of Longitude in eastern Canada. The paper stated that Cobourg clocks – "those of them which are 'now correct' will have to be put forward 12 or 13 minutes." There was some discussion as to whether our two towns would resist giving up their own time, but by this point, it was like King Canute trying to stop the tide. They couldn't - the train companies saw to that!

One argument that purists brought up at the time was that the sun would rise and set at slightly different moments, depending on how far east or west one was - much ado about nothing! Now, it is true that sunrise and sunset times differ by a few minutes between, say Belleville and Port Hope, but I haven't lost any sleep over that.

Clocks were not anywhere as good as they are today. It was to be expected that the better clocks would lose a minute or two each day. This reminds me back of a story in London, England over a hundred years ago. There, an enterprising lady apparently made a living by selling time! She would travel out to the Greenwich Observatory, the place where time was measured astronomically, and there, she adjusted her clock. As she walked back into London, she sold the real time to storekeepers!

Time Zones

We are of course in the Eastern Time Zone. Canada also has Central Time, Mountain Time and Pacific Time as one goes west. We once had Yukon Time, which was a very narrow time zone next to Alaska, but we just scrapped that zone in 1983. Did any of you miss Yukon Time? The next time zone as we cross into Alaska is two hours earlier! To show you how little we worry about the time on the clock and solar time, Anchorage's sun time is a full two hours behind the time showing on the clock. This is on the first day of summer: 11:41 versus 9:41 pm. To the east, we have Atlantic Time, which begins at the New Brunswick border. We altered that time boundary to make it match with the provincial border.

The most interesting of Canada's time zones has to be Newfoundland Time – a half an hour out of step with Atlantic Time! Why is that so? Aren't there enough Newfie jokes without this oddity? There is a legitimate answer to Newfoundland Time and it has to do with maritime history. Before Newfoundland joined Canada in 1949, the island's economy was oriented to the sea. England was more important to Newfoundland than was any link in Canada. St. John's Newfoundland's longitude line sits right on the edge one of Sandford Fleming's time zone boundaries. Atlantic Time did not reflect the real, the sun time in St. John's. So, the colony made its own time, an half an hour out of sync with Eastern Canada. So, by having Newfoundland Time, St. John's is more closely aligned to the real sun time. And as far as the rest of Canada was concerned? In those days, who cared about Canada? London or Boston was more relevant to the island. And Newfoundland? In those days, they were still waiting for the thing that forced us to act – a railroad. When they did get a train, it did not connect up to any other rail line, the very thing that forced us to act. By the way, Labrador uses Atlantic Time, not Newfoundland Time.

Fast Time in Port Hope and Cobourg.

The implementation of Daylight Savings Time came during the First World War. It seemed wasteful to have the sun rise hours before people got out of bed. We needed those hours to maximize war production! So, moving the clocks according to the seasons made some sense. It was left up to the municipalities to decide on savings time. The towns and even villages debated on when exactly Daylight Savings time would begin and end in their communities. For example, in 1937, Cobourg decided to have Daylight Savings time start on May 15th three weeks later than Port Hope's April 24th. Cobourg terminated their daylight time on September 17th, three days before Port Hope ^(C.W. Mar 24, 1937). If one traveled from one town to the next during the summer, our times were different! People missed appointments, trains, church services - everything! It was a constant argument every year. 'When should fast time begin and when should fast time end?' I was told that in World War Two, we had double daylight savings time! It was so frustrating that Cobourg discussed the idea of putting up a big clock for travelers on Highway #2, informing those coming from Port Hope what the real time was in Cobourg! In those early days it was common to call Daylight Savings Time, Fast Time. Farmers have been the most vocal against DST. It is an historic argument – having to do with hitching up the wagon and bringing their food to town. Because the sun rose later in the morning, they were loading up their wagons in the dark! The dew was heavy on the crops!

Our Own, Unofficial, Daylight Savings Time

Years ago, the arrival of incoming boats was often the high point of a young person's day. To be in school when the regular steamboat arrived was frustrating to some students. This local Cobourg story has been revised over the decades. The ships and individuals change names, but the student plot was the same – to make sure school ended before a scheduled boat sailed in. When the shipping season started up each spring, there were a few students who had access to Victoria Hall. The father of one student was the Hall's caretaker, and his family lived there. This gave the boy the chance to climb up into the clock tower and adjust the big hand of the clock, by just a minute each day. That slight change went unnoticed. Apparently this game had been going, off and on, since 1870! Students Henry Pringle and Andy Newton were named

as the schemers. They were also involved with fixing the clocks in the stores where they had part time work (CSS Mar 29 1956).

Fast forward to now. Once, having an approximate idea of the time was good enough. Church Bell, school bells and factory whistles would do the job of keeping us aware. If those bells were wrong, how could one question them?) Today, knowing the time is all important. One might miss the beginning of a television show, the start of a meeting, school or work. It is no longer just a matter of just catching a train, even though that need still exists. That mysterious concept of time runs our lives much more than we may like to think.

Have you ever wondered about the statements on the weather station that the time for maximum UV rays is at 1:17PM? That time is when the sun is at its highest point in the sky, therefore its most intense. Isn't the maximum intensity of the sun supposed to be Noon? Well, it is the change to daylight savings time that pushes 'high noon' up one hour. But what about those 17 minutes? Our time zone covers a considerable area of longitude. Eastern Standard and Daylight Savings Time really only indicate sun time for the middle point of our time zone. Those extra 17 minutes show us how far we are off from the center of our time zone. (Those exact minutes vary over the year. The Earth's rotation is in an ellipse, not a perfect circle.)

If you are still listening intently, I congratulate you. You have noticed that I have made reference to the seasons, to the Earth's movement. That brings me to William King.

Dr. William King

This outstanding citizen of Port Hope deserves recognition for all of his efforts to do with time, with location, with boundaries, with astronomy and his efforts to find out what the real time was.

Who knows about Port Hope's outstanding scientist, Dr. William King? I won't tell anyone in our neighbouring town. (They didn't know about him either). William King came from Britain when he was eight years old and spent his formative years in Port Hope. He attended elementary school here and then went to high school here. (I haven't had the time to see whether it was PHHS or TCS). To further his education, he went off to the University of Toronto. At 22, King became a Dominion Land Surveyor, then a Dominion Topographical surveyor. He had a hand in surveying the Canada - U.S. boundary line, the 49th parallel. In 1874, he worked on latitude and longitude in the Peace River District up in Northern Alberta and B.C. Those grid lines had to be laid out before settlement could proceed. In June of 1890, he was appointed the Chief Astronomer of Canada!

Whoa, you say! A surveyor one day and the chief Astronomer the next? When people think of astronomers, they think of the sky. Governments have never been keen to pay for telescopes, looking at planets, stars or galaxies. There were some real, necessary problems here on Earth that had to be dealt with. It was the astronomers who had the chore of calculating time. Another important thing they did was to precisely find where places were actually located on the Earth! That is the big reason why the government sponsored astronomers! And... who was good at finding where places were on a map? Why, it was Port Hope's William King.

One of King's first triumphs was to find the precise location of Ottawa. If you are going to build an observatory to locate places, you had better make darn sure you knew where you were, to start with! William King used the new telegraph to link Greenwich to Montreal. Having done that, and knowing the exact time it was in Greenwich, he was able to use Montreal's latitude and longitude to pinpoint Ottawa's exact location! Since national surveys were going to use Ottawa as a starting point, this work of his was quite an important accomplishment.

We had surveys before, but it turned out that maps sometimes had places a few hundred meters out of place- occasionally even a mile or more out of place. So what, you ask? Think of that submerged reef in Lake Ontario, right between Port Hope and Cobourg – Peter's Rock or Gull Rock. If that rock was mapped a few hundred meters out of position, there could have been even more disasters on that reef. Peter's Rock has the advantage of having the shoreline nearby. Places such as Sable Island off Nova Scotia are full of shipwrecks.

Dr. William King was instrumental in having the Dominion Observatory built and in establishing the Geodetic Survey of Canada. This information about William King has been rattling around in my head for years, looking for a place to attach itself to. Finally, I am able to tell someone. Now, this tidbit of knowledge is yours! Treasure it!

A hundred years ago, Laurier's Minister of the Interior was Clifford Sifton, the person who was charged with bringing settlers into the empty Prairies. Clifford Sifton received his BA in Cobourg, at Victoria College. It was Sifton who gave William King several tasks. Port Hope's William King carried out surveys to identify where the 49th parallel was along some sections on the Prairies. He began work on the Alaska Panhandle boundary in 1903. In 1906, William King worked on locating 141 degrees West, the Yukon- Alaska boundary line. You can't use the stars for positioning up there in the summer. William King plotted the elevation of the moon to accomplish his task up there. King was charged with plotting lines of Latitude and Longitude in the Peace River district, before settlers moved in. He did that.

Dr. William King: Don't forget this man – he grew up in Port Hope!

I showed you the Antipodes, islands off of New Zealand. The Antipodes are the opposite side of the world, and in this case, those islands are opposite Greenwich. That name is quite appropriate, isn't it? That brings up a question. Where is Cobourg's antipodal position? When you get there, you can point in any direction and state 'That's the closest direction to get home. That spot is in the Indian Ocean, south west of Perth, Western Australia. And what time is it there? Look at your watch. It is twelve hours ahead of us – already tomorrow.

Knowing the time is all important. One might miss the beginning of a television show, the start of a meeting, or school or work. It is no longer just about catching a train, even though that need sometimes exists. The mysterious concept of time controls our lives more than we may like to think. And speaking about the time, it's long past the time for me to stop. I hope I didn't cause the time to drag on too much for you this evening. Thank you for the invitation to come here tonight

Preventative Care for Cemeteries **Recommendations for Pioneer Cemetery Restoration**

Diane Robnik
Trent Valley Archives
Museum Management and Curatorship

Why Preserve Cemeteries?

Cemeteries are an important piece of our heritage.

They are also a non-renewable heritage resource. Therefore, these areas must be protected.

Who Should be Contacted Regarding Cemetery Restoration?

- the deceased's families
- representatives of the cemetery board
- conservation experts
- local historical, genealogical, archaeological societies
- appropriate religious organizations (if necessary)
- cemetery owners
- municipalities (Ontario's Cemeteries Brochure)

Cemetery Safety

- Cordon problem marker off
- lay marker on ground temporarily to avoid further damage
- temporarily remove marker from site if it cannot be left on site and store in an appropriate manner

Cemetery Maintenance

- **do not mow immediately next to markers as the vibrations may damage the stones**
- **use a nylon whip weed eater for close trimming**
- **use a rubber guard and blade guard when mowing**
- **do not use commercial herbicides around stones - even if the product is environmentally safe, the stone can absorb the chemical from the ground and mixed with its own salts, can cause corrosive reactions**
- **plant small, close-lying clovers and ground covers near hard to mow areas**
- **provide trash containers and benches for visitors**
- **educate the public with proper informative signage**
- **educate maintenance personnel of the proper procedures for historic cemetery care** ³

For those municipalities faced with a low operating budget, certain landscaping measures can be taken which could minimize restoration efforts in the future. These include: cutting long grass, trimming around markers, removal of overgrown brush and weeds, repairing and straightening of markers, sowing grass seed or placing sod in bare areas and repairing and painting fences. Each of these will be explained in detail below

At certain sites, shrubs, weeds and second growth trees are overgrown. These should be carefully removed as they often hide old monuments. Do not remove greenery that is not disruptive to stones. Natural heritage should be respected as it too plays a role in the integrity of the site.

The recommended removal technique for trees is for an ISA certified arborist to remove the tree, leaving a stump that is obvious enough not to present a hazard to the visitor, but otherwise low and unobtrusive. Stump grinding is an extremely intrusive method of stump removal that may threaten surrounding headstones and should therefore be avoided.

Sunken areas over graves should be filled and made level. No digging should be done. If earth is brought in to fill depressions, care must be taken that footstones, corner stones and other markers are not accidentally covered.

Features of special importance such as fences and gates should be maintained and plantings reintroduced to enhance the attractiveness of the site.

When Visiting a Pioneer Cemetery...

- respect the fragility of the markers
- do not touch markers or lean against them
- do not take cemetery rubbings unless given permission by cemetery manager

Gravestone Rubbings:

Gravestone rubbings are banned in some areas due to the stones eroding. Always ask the cemetery manager before doing a gravestone rubbing. The following conditions apply in order to make these rubbings safe for the stone: make sure the stone is stable, that it is completely covered, and that no residue is being left on the stone.

Guidelines For Cemetery Protection:

Ontario Cemeteries Act:

44(1) Every cemetery owner shall maintain, without charge to interment rights holders, the grounds of the cemetery, including all lots, structures and markers, to ensure the safety of the public and preserve the dignity of the cemetery.

Cemeteries Act - Revised Standards:

20. The owner of a cemetery shall comply with the standards for constructing, installing, stabilizing, and preserving markers and other cemetery supplies that are set out in sections 21 and 22.

21 (1) The owner may remove a marker only if it cannot be preserved using income from the Care and Maintenance or funds from other sources. (2) The owner shall only use reversible processes to preserve and stabilize a marker the cost of doing so can be paid out of the income received by the Care and Maintenance Fund or out of funds from other sources.

Covered Bronte Pioneer Cemetery project that was worked on including repairs and recommendations.

Hamilton Township Cemeteries

Plainville Bible Christian –corner of Cavan and Canning Road



Cold Springs Pioneer – Cty Rd 18 and Minifie Rd.

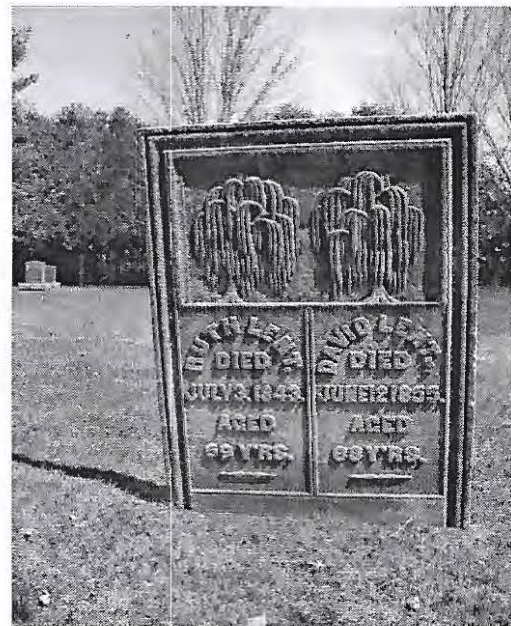


Plainville United – Cavan Road

Precious Corners – Dale Road



Lent's Methodist – Dale Rd.



Baltimore Old Presbyterian – 2949 Meyer's Rd



2007 Annual Dinner
featuring
Edward Rutherford as Colonel By

An excellent evening and dinner was enjoyed by all with our featured guest being Edward Rutherford who portrayed Colonel By and presented the history of Bytown (Ottawa).



Colonel By



David Gregory and his wife



Diana Cunningham and Edward Rutherford

Historical Snippets

By
John Jolie

Editor, Historically Speaking

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September 2006 – Number 206

The Glory of Maps. One of the big pleasures in my life has been to lose myself in the details of a map. They provide so much information. Did you know that in the early days of European exploration, maps were top secret and that one was liable to receive a death sentence for revealing their secrets?

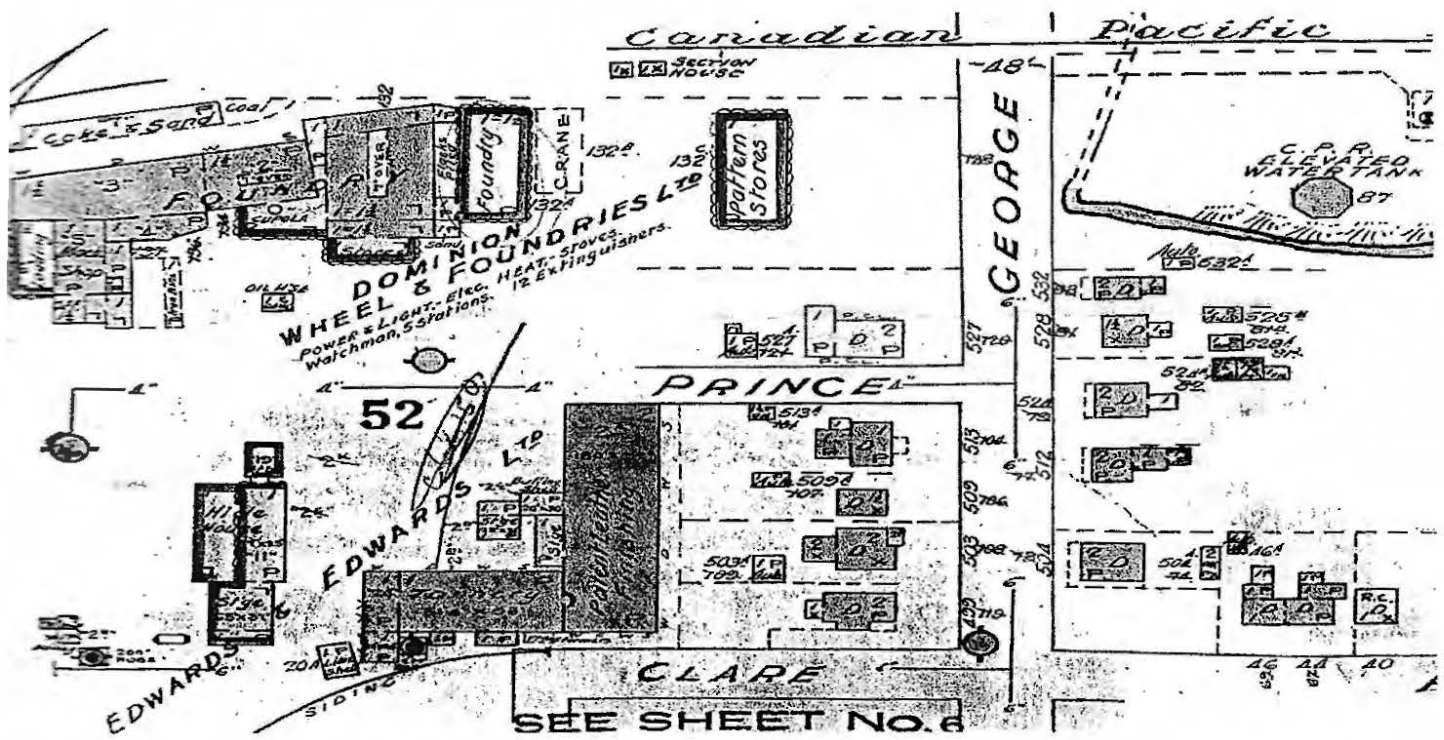
A little known part of Canada's map collection are Fire Insurance maps. Insurance companies had a problem in assessing fire risks in the many areas they served. Therefore, fire insurance maps were made and the companies kept a tight control on their distribution. Every town, including ours, had repeated fires, and blazes could easily sweep through several buildings, even multiple blocks. It is little wonder that the fire departments tended to be among the largest organizations in towns.

There were only a few companies that made fire insurance maps. Their maps contained many details that showed the many fire risks that existed in a neighbourhood. They were magnificent in their scope. The painstaking details found in the maps made them valuable and the insurance company insisted that they had ownership of them, even though municipalities paid for the use of them.

In 1875, the New York firm D.A.Sandborn, prepared maps for 15 Canadian centers including Port Hope and Cobourg. Another company was Goad. These companies did not have to compete – there were enough towns who needed their maps.

Every structure was put on these maps – the shape of the buildings, the material, the sheds, woodpiles, ponds, streams and later, the hydrants. The type of walls, cornice construction, windows, chimneys, skylights were all indicated by means of colour coding, striping or lettering. Anything that would be useful to firemen and to insurance companies was included. Today, the maps provide a cornucopia of details for local historians.

Today, as townscapes change, a computer-generated map can produce a new map within minutes. In the past, such a change would mean producing whole new maps – a tremendous effort! A hundred years ago, the map makers would send 'jigsaw' pieces to be pasted onto the original map. The towns would be instructed to cut out and paste the revised section onto the first map. The company claimed total ownership on each map. The towns only had use of them and had to return them! Today, the field of GIS – Geographic Information Services has married maps, computers and a plethora of details. Today, GIS technicians are indispensable at all levels of government.



October 2006 – Number 207

The King and Queen slept here. Several years ago, when the Queen Mother's 100th birthday was approaching, I was startled to receive a call from CBC television, asking for my recollections of the King and Queen's visit to Cobourg in 1939. I was flattered to receive the call, but I had to explain that in 1939, my parents had yet to meet each other, so I was the wrong person to ask. (Apparently Society member Bud Barr referred the CBC reporter to me, a baby boomer!)

I informed the CBC researcher that I did not know that the Royal Couple had ever visited Cobourg in 1939. I did offer that my mother had seen them in Windsor during that tour. I referred the researcher to a former Cobourg neighbour, Muriel Flexman, who, as a very young journalist, had traveled on the Royal Train across the Prairies. Muriel, a cub reporter, was straight out of school and working for a western paper. She had told me about her unforgettable week on the Royal train, when she occasionally had conversations with the Queen.

However, those tidbits were all I could offer. I speculated that the train possibly passed through Cobourg, on their way to Toronto, but I was not even certain of that.

It is too late now, but I finally know the story. King George VI and Queen Elizabeth (the Queen Mother) did stop here. They spent the night in Cobourg.

The visit to Canada in 1939 marked the first time a reigning monarch had ever come to Canada and the excitement was intense. Every community wanted to be included in the Royal tour.

Before the Royal Couple reached Cobourg, they had been in Ottawa, where they unveiled the monument to the fallen in the Great War. En route, the train was supposed to stop in Brighton overnight, but then, word reached Cobourg that our town would be the stopover for the night.

Despite the short notice, thousands poured into Cobourg from out of town. Obviously, a high percentage of our own citizens also came to the rail yards. CN (today's VIA station) and CP had their stations a stone's throw away from each other. The Royal train arrived on CN tracks and was shunted to a CPR siding just after midnight. While the Royal party slept, the crowds became larger

and larger. Farmers in the area rose earlier than usual to complete their chores and then brought their families to town. Despite the lack of notice, the desire to see the King and Queen had brought loyal subjects flooding in from Kingston, Lindsay, Lakefield and Peterborough and all points in between. Cars from out of town were parked along every street that ran to the tracks.

By the next morning, Monday, May 22nd, an estimated 10,000 were along the tracks, waiting for a glimpse of the Royal Couple. (That estimate would be double the 1939 population of Cobourg). Homes and stores had been hastily decorated with pennants and bunting. So, despite the lack of notice, the town came together in a big hurry. Cobourg was ready to party!

During the night, the Royal train was polished from top to bottom by workers wearing white coats. Water trucks came and refilled the water tanks. Three mail clerks on the train took in bags of mail from the Cobourg post office and from passing mail trains. So, while King George and Queen Elizabeth slept, there was plenty of activity around them. Also, the crowds were growing.

The local militia was positioned at the station and strung out along the railroad crossings. These men had just returned from Kingston, having performed the same duty in that city. They and veterans from the Great War volunteered to protect the royal visitors. The increasing crowds were kept back from the Royal Coach.

School children, brought from as far away as Trenton, gathered at the George Street school (Thomas Gillbard) as early as six a.m. Head counts indicated that more than 1700 children paraded up to the station. Each child was handed a Union Jack flag to wave and they practiced their songs as they marched up George Street to the rail siding. Some children had gathered up huge bouquet of wild flowers to present to the Queen and King. No one was going to miss the first visit of a reigning king to Cobourg!

The train was painted royal blue, with silver and gold trim. It was a stunning sight. The royal coat of arms was on the two train cars bearing the Royal Couple. There was talk that thousands would come down to Victoria Park and continue the celebration after the Royal departure.

Some had waited all night to see the Royal couple, but no one was able to see anything through the curtains on the train. Morning came, increasing the numbers of loyal subjects. There was an increase in activity around the train. Then suddenly the unexpected happened. The train began to pull out! The blinds were still drawn and no one saw the King and Queen!

A few minutes later, about 3000 more loyal subjects were waiting in Port Hope. They too, were disappointed as the train passed through their town. The red tunics of some RCMP were all that was seen in some train windows.

There was some thought that the town should organize a train trip for children to meet the King and Queen in Hamilton, but saner heads prevailed. So, there you have it, the unmemorable Royal Visit of 1939. If the CBC ever call me again and wants this story, I'll be ready!

November 2006 – Number 208

Our Archipelago. Clusters of islands can be found in many places, including right here in Ontario. The Thousand Islands, east of Kingston and the Thirty Thousand Islands in Georgian Bay are prominent examples. It virtually never comes up in casual conversations, but we once had an archipelago in our area! You can find the remains of what were our islands as you drive through the area.

About 12,000 years ago, the final ice age was ending. The ice lobes had bulldozed countless amounts of rock and sand through our area. The ice was melting at the same period,

causing huge amounts of water to flow through here, shaping the piles of glacial debris. That material was not exactly like the gravel and sand deposits we think of – it was frozen, solid material.

Right here, we had two ice lobes moving, trying to squeeze into the same territory. One mass of ice came down the rift valley from the direction of Kingston where Lake Ontario now sits. Another glacier pushed from the north, but it encountered the glacier moving east-west. All of the glacial drift was caught between the lobes and remained there. Today, that is the Oak Ridges Moraine.

It was not only ice that created our landscape, there were awesome amounts of water that ran off the glacier. That also shaped the unsorted glacial materials into streamlined mounds.

When Lake Iroquois was created from the melting glacier, those mounds of material became islands in the lake. This view of Rice Lake could have been the area around Cobourg 8000 years ago. Islands would have been where the Golden Plough is, where one can see Elgin Street climbing the eastern horizon, and even the gentle slope rising up D'Arcy Street from Donegan Park. The lake end of Tremaine Street features a drumlin hill, being eaten into by wave action.

As Rice Lake eventually fills up with sediments, those islands will resemble the gentle rises that make up Cobourg's landscape.

January 2007 – Number 209

Anchorage Realty. Have you ever wondered about the history of some buildings in downtown Cobourg?

As one looks across the street from Liquidation World and scans the north side of King Street East, there is much history to be seen.

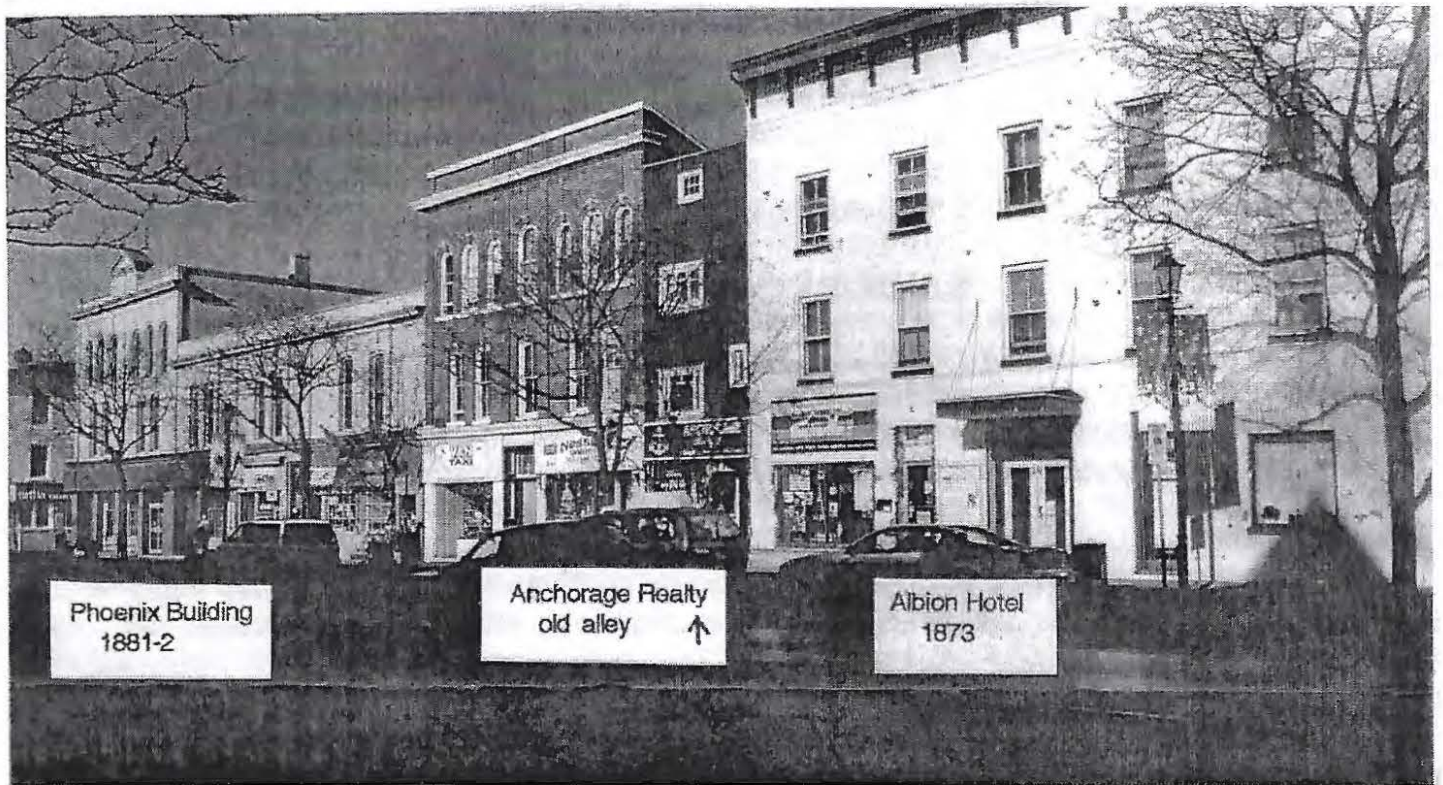
The building on the far left, starting at Division Street, is the Phoenix Block. The frontage of the building along both Division and King East is impressive, extending for many meters as it stretches down those two streets.

Replacing another building that fire destroyed, the Phoenix Block was built between 1881 and 1882. People don't give it much of a glance now, but for many decades it was the largest commercial building in town. Many dozens of businesses have operated there. Stop and soak in the scope of the building the next time you walk by. The ornamental roofscape with the triangular pediment adds to the height. The heavy cornice, the pilasters on the ends are all features to be observed.

To the right, on King East, there is an odd looking building that houses Anchorage Realty – distinct from the others. It is small and the window placement is disorganized. Appearances suggest that it does not belong there. It doesn't! The building to the left of Anchorage was the old Albion Hotel, built in 1873. In those days guests came from the Kingston Road, the harbour, or walked up from the Grand Trunk station.

The Albion had to provide a stable, have woodsheds, a well, a root cellar, - all located at the back. Access to the back of the hotel was along an alley. Then, as time went on, all of the aforementioned needs located at the back were no longer necessary and the alley also lost its importance. Infill occurred. Anchorage Realty now occupies the site of the old alley.

*(Information gleaned from material written by Rob Mikel and Barry King)



February 2007 – Number 210

Treks of Desperation

By 1935 the Great Depression looked to be permanent. The work camps, set up by the Bennett government removed young, unemployed men from the urban areas. Run by the army, the camps were governed by oppressive rules. It did not take long for the frustration of the camp workers to turn into intense anger.

Run by the army, the work camps more closely resembled prisons rather than places of employment. In anger, the camp workers organized (against the rules), talked politics (against the rules), walked out of the camps (against the rules).

In the spring of 1935, the young men headed back to cities. Now, the young camp workers mingled with the urban unemployed and that mass became a force to be feared. Pierre Berton's The Great Depression describes the times well.

In British Columbia, the protesters decided that they should go to Ottawa. The participants climbed aboard boxcars and headed east. They picked up more supporters and were given considerable encouragement from people in communities along the way. However, on July 1st, there was a violent confrontation in Regina, which resulted in the death of one policeman and many injuries. That riot made the Bennett cabinet act. The government ordered the police to prevent the trekkers from continuing.

History books rightly concentrate on that march, but there was another trek that came through Cobourg and Port Hope. Our march began at Queen's Park, in Toronto. The walkers proceeded along Highway #2. They depended on the support of sympathetic people along the way. They walked into Oshawa on July 20th. Of the 337 who started out, 295 managed to reach the

Motor City. It was reported that many of those who gave up were simply too hungry to continue. On that Sunday, many trekkers attended various churches in Oshawa.

By the 23rd they reached Bowmanville, were fed by sympathetic people, and continued their walk into Port Hope that evening. Wary of having too many trekkers canvassing the town, Port Hope limited soliciting permits to 100. Those 100 were permitted to ask for handouts of food, clothes, tobacco and money. The trek leaders insisted that the marchers conduct themselves in public with the utmost courtesy.

That evening, the group marched down Walton Street to the park beside the town hall. 300-350 men and women spent the night there (The ratio of men to women was roughly 10-1). While in Port Hope, one trekker was fingered as a police informer and was ejected from the park. They managed to collect \$75 from sympathetic townspeople. Always aware of their reputation, the trekkers meticulously tidied up the park before leaving, leaving it in better shape than it was before. The leaders were very strict on discipline, not allowing anyone in or out of the campsite without permission.

On July 25th the group walked into Cobourg. Two women took turns standing on a chair in front of Victoria Hall to address a rather sparse group. The trekkers stopped for three hours at Horseshow (Donagan) Park. Speeches were made, and after a late lunch, the marchers continued to Wicklow, where they set up camp the next day. They did not walk alone; a dozen provincial police on motorcycles accompanied the men.

The new Trenton air base also had a work camp and there were concerns about those workers joining in with the trekkers. Rumors of a contingent of 80 Mounties waiting for the trekkers kept everyone on edge. However, only a few of the workers in the Trenton camp joined the march.

The trek continued into Belleville, Napanee, Kingston and Gananoque before turning to the capital. Ottawa wanted town officials along the way to take a tough stand. Civic officials became increasingly hostile, refusing permission for the trekkers to advertise, to seek food or any other supplies. Canvassing for money was severely restricted to a few street corners. Then, by chance, some hoboes, who were not involved in the protest, arrived in Brockville in boxcars. They were promptly arrested and jailed.

On August 9th 500 men reached Ottawa. They were banned from entering Parliament Hill and directed to a remote park where they were allowed to set up camp. After waiting for several days, the men were hungry and demoralized. The trek that went through our area was finished. Today, it does not even rate as a footnote to those desperate times.

March 2007 – Number 211

The Bridge of Sighs

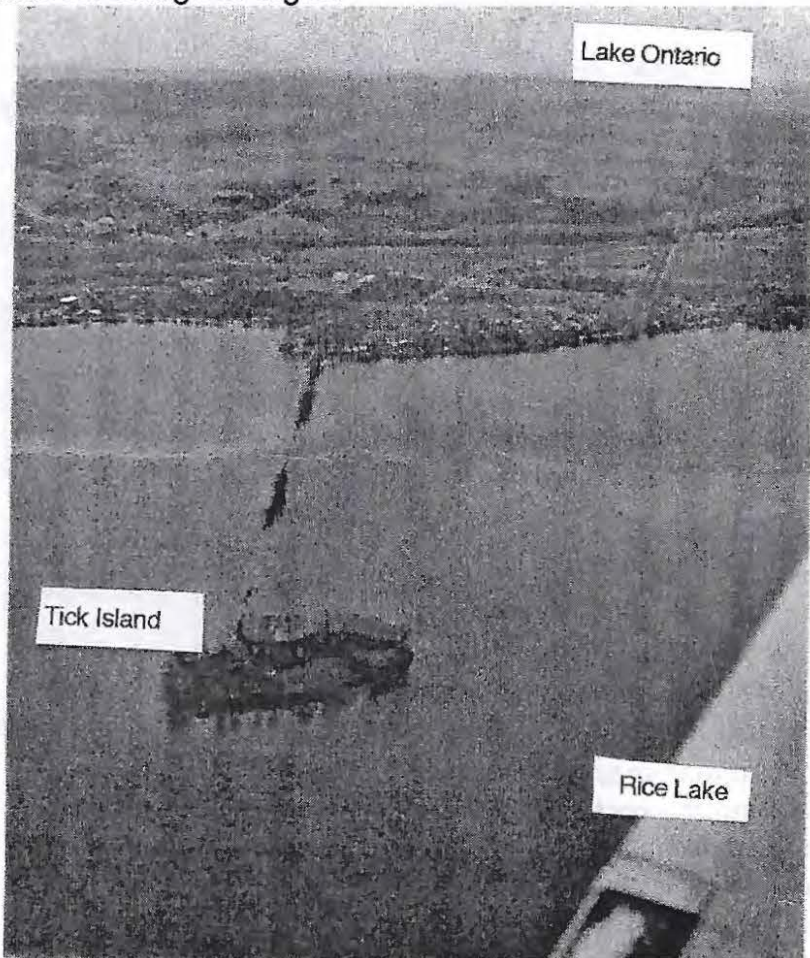
If one goes to Venice, Italy, one might pause and look at a bridge, built by Antonio Contino, in 1600. This short bridge crosses a canal that separates the Palace of the Doges to what used to be a prison. Lord Byron popularized that span, nicknaming it 'the Bridge of Sighs.' Byron spun a tale that prisoners walked across the bridge in chains, sometimes headed for their execution. It was said that one could hear the sighs of the condemned, hence the name of the bridge. Byron's time coincided with the period in our history when Cobourg undertook to build one of the biggest engineering projects that any town, anywhere would be crazy enough to get involved in. Not only did we build one of the earliest train lines in Canada, but we undertook to span Rice lake with a four kilometer long causeway-bridge combination. That project would have given us bragging rights for a long time – if it had worked.

Our railroad ran from the harbour in Cobourg to Harwood, across Rice lake and up into Peterborough.

The route followed the stream valley to the highest point (the Summit) and then descended towards Rice Lake, at Harwood (once called Sully). At Harwood, a causeway was built out to Tick Island. The amount of fill exceeded any estimates, as the muddy bottom kept swallowing up the rock that was dumped there. From Tick Island to the north shore, a series of trusses were constructed on square wooden cribs. To start, log poles were driven into the muddy lake bottom. The cribs were built on those foundations in the winter. Rocks were added in the cribs and surrounding them. A lift bridge allowed the passage of boats through Rice Lake. Completed at the very end of 1854, the Cobourg-Peterborough Railway primarily carried lumber. All other shipments, such as passengers and grain, were secondary. Building secure foundations for any structure is a given. However, our bridge was built on mud! Stabilizing the bridge required immediate and then constant, costly repairs. The builder was Samuel Zimmerman, possibly Canada's richest man. He was aligned with politicians who were able to obtain government money for his projects. The flaws in the bridge were readily apparent. When the Prince of Wales took the train up to Rice Lake, our bridge was already past tense. Officials would not risk his life on our bridge. Instead he took a boat from Harwood on his way up to Peterborough, The Port Hope Guide, aware of Lord Byron's recent writings of that bridge in Venice, gleefully labeled the Rice Lake project as our 'Bridge of Sighs'.

The bridge was totally abandoned. Ice movements pushed on the already weak structure. Finally, in the winter of 1860, the ice took out the bridge. Portions of the causeway out to Tick Island can still be seen from Harwood.

One more development altered the scene. When a dam was built at Hastings to control water levels on the Trent Canal system, Rice Lake was flooded by about two meters, hiding the wooden obstacles that still wait for careless boaters. The old family wealth of Cobourg took a serious hit with our Bridge of Sighs.

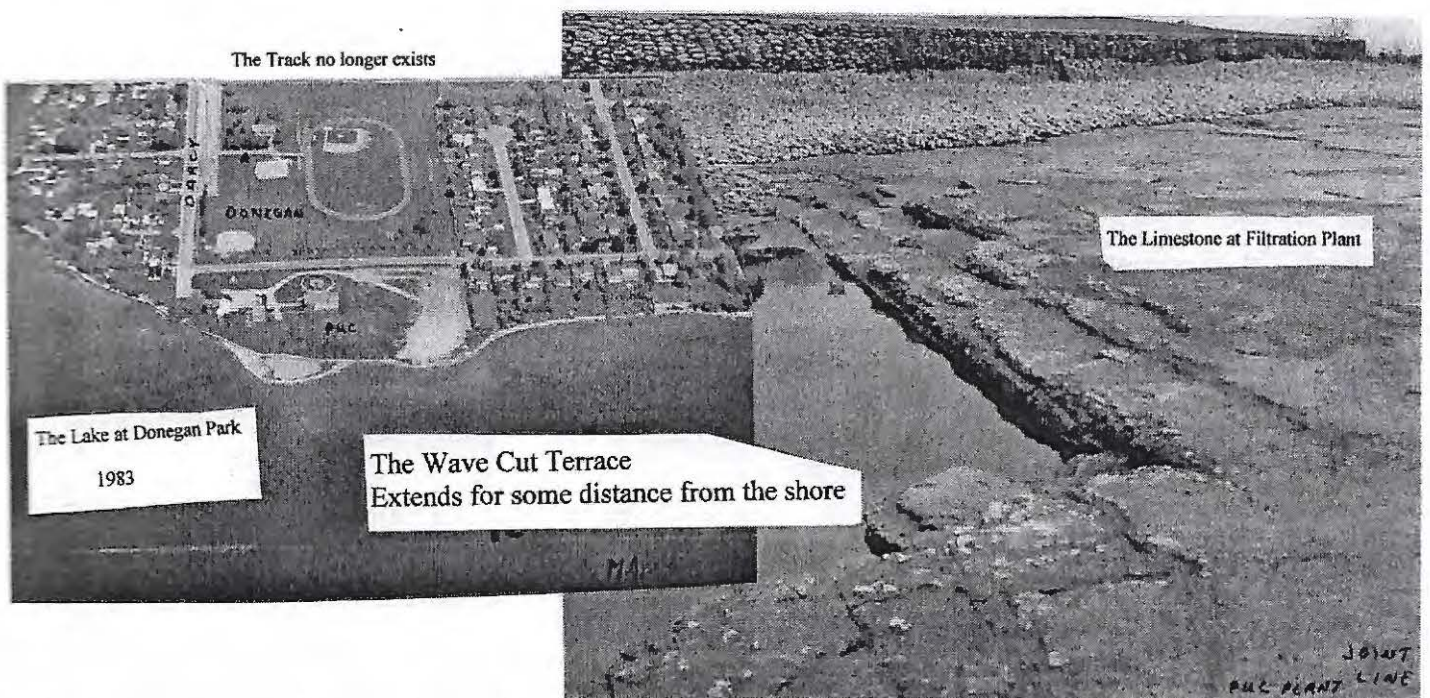


Boulton Point. This name has not been used for almost a century. This promontory is at the bottom of D'Arcy Street. The Boulton's were possibly the wealthiest and most influential of the British aristocratic families in Upper Canada. Cobourg had a Boulton as mayor. Some give George Boulton credit for giving Port Hope its name. At D'Arcy and King, in Cobourg. Two elaborate mansions stood, owned by the family. The much altered coach house of D'Arcy Boulton, on the SE corner, is now a distinctive home. An elaborate mansion attached to the Art Gallery of Ontario, the Grange was a Boulton home. Donegan Park, once named Boulton's Woods, ran from George Boulton's home on King East, right down to the lake. Boulton's Point was at the end of the property. This promontory may be a minor feature, but it has historical and geographic significance.

When the Irish were fleeing the potato famine in the 1830s and 40s, the few settlers in our settlement were terrified of diseases that came with the destitute refugees. Cholera was but one of the horrors that came with the boat people. Village officials decided to segregate the newcomers by ordering their boats to land at the point off D'Arcy Street (the street did not exist then). The refugees could not come into the village and a hospital was set up at the point to deal with the ill. Many died. A settler wrote that locals were terrified of the place – 'nobody comes out alive'.

Boulton's Point has been constantly subjected to erosive wave action and a considerable amount of the headland has been lost. The broken limestone materials have been carried towards the beach area and further pulverized by the harder quartz. The water plant, located at Boulton Point to access clearer water had to be buttressed against wave action with sandbags filled with cement.

In periods of low water one can walk on the ledge of limestone along the lake – a wave cut terrace. Water erosion occurs at the surface, not deeper down. This surface action has created the flat rock surface.



The limestone was formed here about 450,000,000 years ago, about ten times further back than the age of the dinosaurs! They were deposits on the bottom of a warm tropical sea. One can find sea fossils in the rock. With only a cursory glance, one can observe straight breaks in the rock, called joints. Erosion has removed many meters of rock, lessening the downward pressure on the limestone. The brittle rock has responded.