

# HISTORICAL REVIEW 5

## 1986-1987



COBOURG AND DISTRICT  
HISTORICAL SOCIETY

HISTORICAL SOCIETY PROGRAMME 1986-87

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## OCEAN TO OCEAN

### The Life of Sandford Fleming

Elizabeth R. Farquharson

What Canadian photograph is more famous than the one of "The Last Spike" and who stands head and shoulders above the crowd? Sandford Fleming, with white beard and top hat, was not only a big man in stature but big in his visions of Canada. He had worked long and hard for a united Canada and he believed a railroad from "ocean to ocean" would help to accomplish this. This photograph was the culmination of that dream - the driving of the last spike in the Canadian Pacific Railway at Craig-gellachie on November 7th, 1885.

Sandford Fleming was born to Elizabeth Arnot and Andrew Greig Fleming on January 7th, 1827, at the family home in Kirkcaldy, Scotland. Sandford attended the Kirkcaldy Burgh School and he was a good student, with a strong head for figures. He showed a special talent for drawing, and wherever he went he carried a sketchbook and pencil. Sandford's skills in mathematics and drawing suggested that the boy might have an aptitude for engineering, so, at the age of 14, he was apprenticed to the prominent local engineer and surveyor, John Sang. For the next four years he laboured in Sang's workshop from 8 each morning until 6 at night.

At the workshop, he was mastering the basic skills of engineering and surveying and most important, for the future course of his life, Sang engaged the boy on railway surveys - especially from Edinburg to Perth, and from Perth to Dundee. Sandford was fortunate to have been associated, if only in a small way, with the... early days of steam railway development in Britain for it was here that the age of steam railway locomotion began with George Stephenson's Stockton and Darlington line in 1825.

For some time there had been much talk in the Fleming household about the attractions of life in the New World. Andrew Fleming's cousin, Dr. John Hutchison, returned to Kirkcaldy in 1843 from Peterborough, Canada, and letters between the two cousins probably started the idea.

By the beginning of 1845 plans were made for the two eldest sons, David and Sandford, to go to Canada. Passage was booked on the sailing ship "Brilliant" for the two brothers and their cousin Henry.

At sunrise on June 5th, 1845, six weeks after setting out from Glasgow, the boys saw Quebec city with the sun glinting on the tin roofs of the town. The St. Lawrence River was crowded with sailing ships.

The river highway along the St. Lawrence carried them to Montreal, then up the Ottawa River to the small community of Bytown, now Ottawa, down the Rideau Canal to Kingston, finally arriving at Cobourg, June 17th, 1845. They were "too late to catch the steamer

at Rice Lake to Peterborough" and rather than wait overnight they decided to hire a farmer with his cart to take them to their destination. Eight weeks away from Scotland, Sandford and David ... arrived at the town of Peterborough at sundown the same day. Sandford said in his diary that the town "looked rather a poor like place where he entered it," commenting on the "stumps of trees in the middle of the streets." Next day, when Dr. Hutchison took them on a tour of the town he was more impressed. He noticed some good shops and stores and remarked that "the place looks very well down about the river - about the size of the Clyde at Glasgow."

The Hutchison House was to be Sandford's first home in Canada and for two years he made it his home-base while he sought to establish himself as a surveyor and engineer in his adopted land. Dr. John Hutchison was Peterborough's leading doctor and a well-respected member of the community.

The Fleming brothers actively participated in the life of the town attending parties and picnics where Sandford met Miss Hall, the girl who was later to become his bride.

David Fleming soon found work on the construction of locks and bridges on the Trent River and later would work for the Jacques and Hayes furniture company in Toronto. Sandford was less fortunate.

He had letters of introduction to such Canadian notables as Bishop Strachan and Casimir Gzowski of the Department of Roads and Harbours who advised him to return to Scotland. Happily for Canada, he did not heed Gzowski's advice. Instead he travelled all over Ontario showing his sketches to any architect who would look at them in the hope that someone would offer him a job.

Early in 1846, Fleming hit upon the idea of making a detailed survey of Peterborough and published 235 copies of the town plan which he sold for three dollars each. Copies were in such demand that Fleming was encouraged to undertake similar surveys of Cobourg and of the Newcastle District.

He was asked to draw a plan for a spire for St. Peter-in-Chains Church in Peterborough and Sandford records, "Mr. Butler, Priest of the Catholic church wants a plan for completing the spire of Church, up on Friday looking at it. Saturday drawing out a design for spire."

Though not making a fortune, Fleming was gainfully self-employed for the first time. Sandford had found his first job with a survey company in Toronto, where he was to draw up a plan of the city. By 1849 Fleming had gained valuable experience and felt himself ready to take the necessary examinations in Montreal to become a provincial land surveyor.

Armed with his licence, Fleming was ready to make his mark in Toronto. In June 1849, Fleming and a few friends set up an association of Surveyors and Engineers to be known as the Canadian Institute, now the Royal Canadian Institute, and he was a frequent contributor to its periodical, the Canadian Journal. At this time

he was to embark on his most ambitious survey project yet - the mapping of Toronto Harbour and the adjacent shores of Lake Ontario.

By 1851 Fleming, now aged 24, had been in Canada for six years and he had reason to be proud of himself. Tall, over 6 feet, broad-shouldered, with a thick reddish beard, he was thoroughly established in Toronto. He had his own office, a growing circle of friends, several accomplishments to his name, and he was well known as an innovative and talented surveyor. Besides his work as a surveyor he now applied himself to the design of Canada's first postage stamp. This was the three penny Beaver stamp and it was issued for public use April 23rd, 1851.

In 1852, Fleming was taken on as Assistant Engineer for the Ontario, Simcoe and Huron Railway which was to run north from Toronto to the shores of Georgian Bay. His task was to survey the route from Barrie to the shores of Georgian Bay through a tangle of bush, dense forest, granite and swamp. Fleming's surveying tools are now on display at Hutchison House Museum.

By the end of 1853, more interesting prospects engaged Fleming's thoughts: "Dec. 31. An intimacy growing up with Miss Hall of Peterborough...how long or how it may terminate I don't know...." This was Jeannie Hall, whom he had met in 1845 when he first arrived in Peterborough.

It took a serious accident to show Fleming and Jeannie that they were in love. On January 6th, 1854, they were returning from Toronto to Peterborough when their sleigh overturned and the horses bolted. The couple were thrown to the ground and Fleming's head struck a tree stump. Luckily Jeannie escaped serious injury and managed to get him to a nearby farmhouse. No bones were broken and Jeannie tended his injuries until he was well enough to carry on to Peterborough. A year later, January 3rd, 1855, they were married.

Soon after his marriage, he was promoted to Chief Engineer of the Ontario, Simcoe and Huron Railway - now called the Ontario Northern. He often had to leave his new wife while he went into the field with the survey and construction crews but he wrote to her often and there were frequent family gatherings at the Fleming farm at Craighleith.

In November 1855, Jeannie gave birth to their first child, a son named Franky. They would have a large family; altogether, nine children, but unfortunately three would die in infancy.

Meanwhile work on the Ontario Northern neared completion and Fleming's job as Chief Engineer was drawing to an end. In 1863 it was decided by the governments of Canada, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick to build an Inter-colonial Railway linking the eastern provinces. Fleming was the choice of all three governments to carry out the surveys as Chief Engineer. Embarking on a new career with the Intercolonial, Fleming moved Jeannie and the Children to Halifax so they could be together. The family settled in a spacious house, The Lodge, in the suburbs of Halifax. This would be the Fleming

home for the next five years and they were very happy there.

With the Intercolonial survey work completed, Fleming's work now centred in Ottawa. In October 1869 he and Jeannie gathered up the children and moved to Ottawa, to the corner of Daly and Chapel Streets, into their new residence called "Winterholme."

Fleming had prospered and now moved in the highest social circles. He and Jeannie were on friendly terms with the Prime Minister and Lady Macdonald. A few months after moving to Ottawa the Flemings gave a grand ball at Winterholme for more than 150 guests.

Winterholme would also be the centre for many family activities. Sandford Fleming's happiest hours were with his family and he often had as many as 50 relatives in his Ottawa home and welcomed them all.

In 1876 Fleming went to Britain and while there an incident, trivial in itself, occurred which in due course altered the practice of telling time all over the world. Fleming missed a train and, irked at the inconvenience, he sought a solution to the problem that played havoc with railway schedules. His answer to the confusing way of showing time was as simple as replacing a day divided into two 12-hour series with one of 24 consecutive hours. Fleming went on to propose a global system of reckoning time based on 24 time zones separated by lines of longitude and with a "prime meridian" to set the standard for all nations. In effect, the whole world would set its clocks against one standard.

In Canada there were no less than five standards of time between Halifax and Toronto and some travellers carried watches with several faces to denote the time in different places.

In 1879 he put his scheme to the Canadian Institute and it was published in the proceedings. The idea was obviously a good one. The difficulty would be to persuade other nations to accept it.

The Marquis of Lorne, Governor General, saw a copy of Fleming's address and was impressed and circulated copies to governments throughout the world. The Czar of Russia was among the first to sponsor the idea and called an International Time Conference in Rome in 1882. In October 1884 the International Prime Meridian Conference in Washington saw 25 nations choose Greenwich, England, to become the reckoning line as of January 1st, 1885. But Canada and the United States did not wait for the international agreement; they adopted standard time in October 1883.

As early as 1858 Sandford Fleming spoke of a great railway line spanning the continent, from ocean to ocean, before an audience in the town hall at Port Hope. The province of Manitoba, in 1870, and British Columbia, in 1871, joined the Canadian Confederation and for the first time Canada extended from sea to sea. The Canadian government promised British Columbia that it would construct a railway line connecting the new province with eastern Canada within a

decade. It was an enormous undertaking for a young country - both physically and financially. The country was fortunate, however, to have farsighted men whose reach dared to exceed their grasp - men like the first Prime Minister, Sir John A. Macdonald, and the railway surveyor and engineer, Sandford Fleming. Prime Minister Macdonald turned to his friend Sandford Fleming for help in getting the project underway and on the very day that British Columbia entered Confederation, Fleming dispatched survey parties east from Victoria and west from the upper Ottawa River.

Fleming was determined to review every mile of the proposed route himself and in July 1872, the 45 year old Fleming set off from Toronto for the Pacific coast, accompanied on the journey by his son Frank and two Halifax friends, Rev. George Grant and Dr. Moren. The Rev. George Grant kept a detailed record of their long march to the Pacific which was published in book form in 1872. "Ocean to Ocean" told the story of their overland trek by railway, steamer, red river cart, canoe, horseback and on foot. Fleming and his party finally reached Victoria 103 days after setting out from Toronto.

In October 1880 Macdonald signed a contract in London with George Stephen and Donald A. Smith to finance and complete the Pacific Railway and William Cornelius Van Horne, an American railway builder, was brought in as General Manager. The railway building began, a project that was to take five years, an amazingly short period of time considering the immense undertaking.

In 1885, Fleming was elected to the Board of Directors of the Canadian Pacific Railway, official recognition of his vital role in the enterprise.

Finally, on October 27th, 1885, a train with a private car at the rear containing Canadian Pacific Railway directors, Donald Smith, William Van Horne, George Harris and Sandford Fleming headed westward and reached the "end of the steel" at Revelstoke. By 9:00 a.m. on November 7th the last rail was laid in place at Craigellachie. All that remained was for the last spike to be driven home. The honour fell to the most senior of the directors present, Donald Smith. On June 28th, 1886, at 8 o'clock in the evening, the first train left Montreal for the Pacific Coast. It arrived in Port Moody, British Columbia, at 12 o'clock noon on July 4th. The journey that had taken Fleming, the surveyor, 103 days to complete took the first through train only 140 hours.

In 1888 Fleming's beloved wife Jeannie died suddenly, leaving a great emptiness in his life. The couple had been married for 33 years. Fleming filled the void with unceasing travel to promote his idea for a Pacific Cable. He had Sir John A. Macdonald's support. After much perseverance and meetings with the countries involved - Britain, Canada, Australia and New Zealand - the cable was laid and on the day the line was officially opened, Fleming dispatched two telegrams to the Governor General in opposite directions around the globe.



Many honours were bestowed on Fleming during his lifetime in recognition of his services to Canada and the world. But few honours pleased him more than his election in 1880 to the chancellorship of Queen's University, Kingston. Fleming himself had never studied for a university degree and was deeply honoured by the appointment. When chosen Chancellor of Queen's he had not yet received any university honours himself. Four years later, in 1884, St. Andrew's University in his homeland of Scotland, conferred upon him the degree of Doctor of Laws, honoris causa. So he became "Dr. Fleming." Within the year, Columbia University in the United States conferred the same degree upon him and Queen's University would confer the degree of L.L.D. upon him in 1908.

In 1897, on the occasion of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee, Fleming was knighted by the Queen. He was promoted in the Order to which he had been admitted in 1877 and was to be Knight Commander of the Order of St. Michael and St. George (K.C.M.G.).

On his 80th birthday, January 7th, 1907, his family gathered around him and presented him with this illuminated address on which the thistle of Scotland and the maple leaf of Canada combine to frame a listing of the important events of his life. It reads, in part: "It is with joy and thankfulness that we congratulate you on reaching the age of four score years." and goes on to express their love and prays, "that in God's Providence you may long be spared to us in health." It is signed by the members of his family.

In 1908, at the age of 81, Fleming embarked on a project to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the Nova Scotia legislative assembly, the oldest legislature in Canada. Fleming proposed that a memorial tower be erected in Halifax to mark the occasion and he donated a large tract of land to the city as a public park and site for the tower.

On August 14th, 1912, The Governor General, The Duke of Connaught, formally dedicated the tower on behalf of the people of the British Empire. Sir Sandford Fleming, K.C.M.G., stood beside him, straight and erect despite his 85 years.

Fleming was back in Nova Scotia in 1915 when, on July 22nd, he died at the age of 88; one of Canada's most remarkable men.

## SETTING THE RECORD STRAIGHT

### Who Did The Stone Carvings on Victoria Hall?

James Leonard

Victoria Hall is unquestionably one of the most architecturally and historically significant buildings still standing in Canada. Few people would argue that one feature that ranks Victoria Hall among the best examples of 19th century Canadian architecture, is the fine stone carvings on its facade. If one were to look in many local history books, architectural digests, or heritage magazines for information on this aspect of its construction, one would see writers confidently awarding the noted Canadian architect William Thomas the credit for the stone work.

The purpose of this paper is to show that this claim is incorrect. The stone cutting contractor at Victoria Hall was in fact, a Welsh born stonemason by the name of Charles Thomas Thomas (1820-1867), and my great-great-great uncle.

The historical consensus crediting William Thomas with the work, has been put together in the last fifteen years or so, by restoration architect Peter John Stokes, architects Howard V. Walker and Eric Arthur, and historian Thomas Ritchie in their various writings on Cobourg and its Town Hall. Peter Stokes writes in the book Victorian Cobourg - A 19th Century Profile:

The stone cutting contractor was no less than the firm of William Thomas...which executed the elaborate ornament of Corinthian capitals...bearded heads... lyre ornaments...as well as the ashlar facings to the street facade.

Thomas Ritchie makes a similar claim in the May 1967 issue of Architecture Canada as does Howard Walker in the Feb/Mar 1984 issue of Canada Century Home magazine.

All of these written sources contradict our family history account which states that Charles Thomas was contracted to do the stone work, and that he came to Cobourg from Wales, bringing with him a skilled work team and his three year old orphaned niece, my maternal great grandmother Mary Thomas (1854-1937). The family story goes on to say that after his work was completed, Charles Thomas left Cobourg and was later killed on a bridge construction project somewhere in the United States. Before he left Cobourg though, he put his niece Mary under the charge of a Mrs Sarah Wright, a servant at the house of the Hon. James Cockburn in Cobourg. This is supported by data in the 1861 and 1871 Census. Mary Thomas later married Thomas J. Wark (1845-1913), second caretaker and court crier at Victoria Hall. His father was James Wark (1802-1867), the first caretaker of Victoria Hall. Thomas and Mary Wark lived in back quarters in the building and raised a large family. Among the children was my grandmother Clarice Wark-Romano (1892-1970). This family history as is, was passed down verbally to

our family, by Mary Thomas-Wark herself. I decided at the outset that if this story about Charles Thomas was indeed correct, then I wanted to try to set the historical record straight, and since I had to refute the accepted historical consensus to do this, I needed to find new primary evidence that would clearly link Charles Thomas to Cobourg and to Victoria Hall.

First of all, I searched through original source material directly related to the construction of Victoria Hall. These sources however proved to be of little help since in every case when the stone contractor was mentioned, they referred to only a 'Mr. Thomas'. The minutes of the Cobourg Town Council 1856 to 1859, and the Cobourg Star also for the years 1856 to 1859 housed in the Toronto Reference Library, referred in every instance to only 'Mr. Thomas'. In Edwin C. Guillet's book Cobourg 1798-1948, the Cobourg Star of July 7, 1858 is quoted. It states simply that:

a vast amount of stone cutting has been accomplished...  
These carvings, together with the fine bearded face  
which forms the keystone of the arch are the work of  
Mr. Thomas, contractor for the stone cutting, and  
certainly do him great credit.

As far as I can determine, the writers mentioned earlier, relied only on this Cobourg Star reference from Guillet's book, as the primary evidence in making the William Thomas claim. Because only the name 'Mr. Thomas' appears, it would seem that they jumped to the conclusion that it must be the architect William Thomas, without apparently, considering the possibility that the Star might have been referring to another 'Mr. Thomas'. They reinforced this assumption by pointing out that in his youth, William Thomas may have been an apprentice stone cutter, and so would have had the necessary background to do the work in Cobourg.

Before I began my research, I felt that this conclusion had certain flaws, and left basic questions unanswered. Why first of all, would an architect of William Thomas's recognized stature at the time, have allowed himself or his firm to work as stone cutters on a project designed by his chief rival Kivas Tully? If secondly, Tully hoped to surpass William Thomas's St. Lawrence Hall on his own Cobourg project as Peter Stokes has written, why then would he have used William Thomas himself, to help do this?

I still however could not find evidence directly related to the building of Victoria Hall, that could prove my point. I then decided to search in the Ontario Public Archives to see what original evidence it might have on Cobourg's Town Hall. I came across the working papers of William and David Burnet, general contractors for the construction of Victoria Hall. Among their notes were two receipts signed by "Wm & D. Burnet" for payment to "Mr. Thomas...on account of stone construction at Town Hall building". They were dated October 8, 1857 and September 11, 1858, and for 114 pounds and 800 dollars respectively. There was also a letter from John Worthington of Toronto, the Cleveland free stone supplier, written to the Burnets, and dated May 7, 1859. Only one direct reference was

made to the stone contractor when Worthington asked, "has Thomas finished up his work, how does his account stand?" The wording of this letter would suggest that this 'Mr. Thomas' had a working association with John Worthington. I also discovered an 1859 ledger recording payment on account, to "Mr. Thomas for cut stone gate peirs". Needless to say I was disappointed since even in the Burnet files there was reference only to a 'Mr. Thomas'.

The available evidence on the construction of Victoria Hall was simply too sketchy and incomplete to be conclusive in my study. But recently I have discovered new evidence although not directly related to Victoria Hall, that does provide a full name reference to Charles Thomas and linking his name to Cobourg, as well as new evidence that links him to the building of Victoria Hall. Firstly, three sources confirm that Charles Thomas lived in Cobourg, and only between the years 1857 to 1859; exactly the period when the stone work was being done. They also confirm that while in Cobourg, his occupation was stonemason. The Poll Book for the South Ward of Cobourg dated December 31, 1857 is the first of these. It lists:

C.T. Thomas/builder/Covert

The second is the Assessment Roll of the Town of Cobourg for the year 1859. It lists him in the West Ward as:

Charles T. Thomas/aged 39/stone cutter/  
householder/King St

It also lists him in the South Ward as:

C.T. Thomas/aged 39/stone cutter/  
freeholder/Ontario St S

Charles Thomas does not appear on the 1856 Assessment Roll, nor does he appear on the Census for 1861. The third of these sources linking Thomas to Cobourg, is a deed made between him and Thomas Scott, the Town Postmaster. It was registered on June 1, 1859 and begins with the statement:

Charles Thomas, Thomas of the Town of Cobourg  
in the County of Northumberland and marble  
cutter of the first part...

It records him and his wife Susan, selling their Ontario St South property to Thomas Scott for 270 dollars. This sale was presumably made when Charles Thomas was ready to leave Cobourg and his work completed.

The most conclusive evidence I found was in the Ontario Public Archives. It proves that Charles Thomas was a subcontractor at Victoria Hall during its construction. Knowing that Thomas was accidentally killed sometime after leaving Cobourg, I decided to search the Ontario Surrogate Court records on microfilm in the Archives, assuming that he might have relocated somewhere else in Ontario and perhaps left a will. I did not find Thomas's will.

but in the Surrogate Court Clerk's Application Register, I did come across a Probate Application listing:

Charles Thomas, Thomas/builder/having resided in  
Ottawa/dying on or about December 26, 1867/widow,  
Susan M. Thomas

Now at least I knew where he relocated, and the date of his death.

With this newly found information I was then able to find a death notice and even an obituary. In the Ottawa Citizen for January 3, 1868, I discovered:

THOMAS-At Quincy, Illinois on Christmas Day,  
Charles Thomas, Thomas formerly of this city.

Although only a death notice, it does at least substantiate our family history which states that he died somewhere in the United States

But in the Ottawa Times for December 28, 1867, I located this detailed obituary. (copy enclosed) It clearly states that Charles T. Thomas was a stonemason and builder, and most importantly, that he was a subcontractor responsible for some aspect of the construction of the Town Hall in Cobourg. It is fair to conclude that he was the stone cutting contractor, considering what the Assessment Roll, deed, and Poll Book list as his occupation while in Cobourg.

Charles Thomas must have been well established and skilled in his trade considering the significance and scale of the projects he worked on. For example, the Departmental Buildings mentioned in the obituary, are the East and West blocks of the Parliament Buildings in Ottawa. Thomas's firm on this project, Jones, Haycock and Clark won tender to build the Departmental Buildings in November 1859. Since there is no record of Charles Thomas being in Cobourg after 1859, it would seem likely that he left Cobourg that year, and move directly to Ottawa to begin work on these buildings as Superintendent of Works.

The obituary lists his employer in London, England as 'ubit & Co'. This was probably meant to read 'Cubitt & Co', which was one the most important contracting firms in Great Britain in Victorian times.

The erection of Brock's Monument under the supervision of Charles Thomas according to the obituary, could be a new source of confusion since architect William Thomas designed it. One must keep the roles of the two Thomas' separate. While William Thomas was the architect, Charles Thomas was a subcontractor.

The stone contracting firm for Brock's Monument was Worthington Brothers of Toronto; the same firm that supplied the stone for the building of Victoria Hall, as mentioned earlier. Charles Thomas must have established his working association with Worthington's on this project which was started in 1852; the same year the obituary

says Thomas came to Canada.

The obituary is perhaps the key piece of original evidence in my study, since it very strongly suggests that Charles Thomas was the stone cutting contractor at Victoria Hall and not William Thomas as previously believed. I submitted my findings to the Canadian Inventory of Historic Buildings in Hull, Quebec at their request. This was their response:

The Ottawa Times obituary notice is...a happy find, and seems to set the matter to rest. I have...filed all of your information in our own research files; from now on, at least, we'll be able to give Charles T. Thomas his full due when we write about Victoria Hall.

### The OTTAWA TIMES

Saturday, December 28, 1867  
page 2 column 5

#### Obituary Notice-

A short time since it became our painful duty to record a sad accident to our late fellow townsman, Mr Charles T. Thomas, which rendered necessary the amputation of a leg. Subsequent to the amputation he suffered very greatly, and afterwards a fever set in which ended in death on Christmas Day. The remains will be brought to this city for interment, arriving next Tuesday morning. The funeral will be attended by the Masons and members of the St George's Society, of which due notice will be given.

The deceased gentleman was, during the erection of the Departmental Buildings in this city, Chief Superintendent of Works, under Messrs. Jones, Haycock and Co., and in that capacity earned for himself a high reputation for zeal and integrity. He was a skilled and experienced stone mason, several years of his life having been passed in the employ of Messrs. Ubit and Co., the eminent contractors of London, England.

Mr Thomas was for sometime Superintendent of Public Works under the Imperial Government of Bermuda, which place he left for Canada about the year 1852; since then and up to the moment of the sad accident resulting in his death, he was engaged as subcontractor in the erection of many important buildings on this continent. The present national monument at Queenston reared by a grateful people to the memory of the 'Gallant Brock', was erected under his supervision, so was the Montreal Bank and Town Hall in Cobourg, the latter considered to be one of the handsomest buildings in the Dominion. The subject of our notice was in every respect an excellent man. In business he was strictly correct in all his transactions; as a husband and father, most affectionate, as a philanthropist, his peer was not to be found in this city. In his death the St George's Society experience the loss of a most indefatigable member, and with us, they mourn over the sad event which has removed him from our intercourse, and deeply sympathize with his bereaved widow and afflicted family.

## MOUNTED POLICE CONTACT WITH NATIVES OF THE NORTH

(in conjunction with the Festival of Inuit Culture)

Professor John Jennings

The scope of this paper covers mainly from 1894 when the police first went into the north - that is, north of 60 - to 1930. The police arrived in the West in 1874 and one should start by looking at this period because the police took with them, into the North, the attitudes which developed in the West.

The police were the first arm of national policy so the Indians could be put aside and allow the railway to come through. The police had great rapport with the Plains Indians, great respect for them and this was initially very good for the Indians. The Mounted Police came with very strict ideas of keeping the white population under control and in keeping liquor from the Indians. These same ideas were later carried to the North.

The way the police thought about the Indians was set very clearly in this first period. Although scrupulously fair in their dealings with the Indians, the officer corps showed a late-Victorian imperialist mentality that was in some ways very good, but in some ways was quite unbearable. In the Mounted Police officers there was no doubt about the culture of Britain and its laws and there is no empathy for anything else.

Although you have this combination of scrupulous honesty in dealing with the Indians and to do fairness to them, there is this overbearing sense that eventually these Indians must be retooled into white men.

Most of the officers came from Loyalist families which says something about their attitudes to law and order. The fundamental policy was that they must do the opposite of what the Americans would do to the Indians. What you get in the West, and which carries on into the North, is the establishment of a police state. But there were no abuses in the early days.

The attitudes developed in the West were carried to the North in the 90's. There had been complaints about what the prospectors were up to. By 1895 there was a small but significant police contingent in the Yukon. Their early reports indicated a significant difference in the North. In the West, it seemed necessary to place the Indians on reservations, but there were no population pressures in the North. They were saying 'leave the Indians alone, they are doing quite nicely'.

But there were problems with the whiskey trade. The policy was, you must not allow an area like this, which is just starting to get populated, to get out-of-hand. Get in before settlement. Unlike the American frontier, here the police had absolute authority. By 1898, when the Yukon gold rush was in full swing, the police were

there, they had established themselves and were in control so that as the hordes of miners poured in, the police were there to monitor 'the pursuits of happiness.'

But many of the Mounties referred to the Northern Indians as 'a lazy, shiftless lot'. No one has argued that the police weren't fair to the Indians but it could be argued that the police looked down on them. When Dawson City was in full swing, there was a rule that Indians must not come into white settlements - like the pass system in the reservations to the south. And this policy lingered until the Second World War.

You could say there was no contest between human rights and legislating morality. One of the big things about the Mounted Police in the West, and people loved it, was that they were so repressive in their late Victorian notions of things. On human rights, you are seeing something ghastly, and yet the police made an argument, which won over a lot of people, that for the good of the Indians, they must not be allowed into white communities.

There is no question that the police saw a lot of dirty, lazy Indians around Dawson and White Horse. But I think the situation was much more complex. The police just were not in contact with those Indians who were determined to continue the old ways. It is a case of the police seeing Indians in the initial stage of being embraced by white culture. One can criticize the police lack of empathy towards those Indians in close contact with whites and in the throes of a real culture shock.

But the police on trips into the interior made a special point of saying that they could not have made these trips without Indian help. They were saying, in modern terms, that they relied on the experts. The police had very different attitudes towards those Indians who chose to be bums in the towns and those, the great majority at the time, who were continuing the old way of life.

One aspect of police policy that was enormously successful and that I think benefited the Indians was the patrol system. The figures of annual mileage done by police patrols is just staggering. What it shows is an intimate knowledge of the country that these police were dealing with. It shows how few police there were for this huge area. They were able, by and large, to control things like liquor and firearms going to the Indians. So there were very few murders and there was not one unsolved murder in the North. Crime statistics for the North show an extraordinary lack of crime, especially in Indian crime. To me, the key is simply the control of the white riff-raff.

The far North and the start of police relations with the Inuit: the far north was totally ignored by the Canadian government until the 20th century. Canada was preoccupied with settling the West. It was not until there was a perceived threat from the Americans that the government went into action. So you have the police heading farther north because of the threat of American whalers. The double threat prompting the police was first of all sovereignty and



secondly, the debauching of the Inuit.

So in 1903, a small contingent was sent to the Arctic. For the next quarter century this minuscule band was almost Canada's total presence in the Far North. They handled just about every aspect of government. And they were successful. Their mere presence was enough to end the debauching of the Inuit.

Gradually over the next few decades police posts began to spread in the North. The striking thing in this period, right up to the 1930's, is the tiny number of men involved. The government was able to establish a major presence in the North with these few men who worked tirelessly, in isolation, for 50 cents a day, plus expenses. As law enforcers, life was pretty dull. The annual reports were repeating, year after year, no crime, liquor not a problem, whites under control, most Indians self-sufficient.

One of the features of the early years was the remarkable lengthy police patrols. And almost every one of them relied on native technology. Eventually the police learned a lot of this technology and techniques of survival. But initially they relied almost totally on their native guides.

The police thought the Inuit were a terrific people - hospitable, honest, helpful, good manual workers. The police admired their extreme toughness, their ability to survive so happily in such a hostile climate. There was an enormous respect for these people. And another nice thing, over and over again, the police admit that the Inuit are very much their superior in northern survival and toughness.

And there is much evidence of social rapport between the races - although this did not extend to marriage. The police often commented on how law-abiding the Inuit were and how promptly they paid their debts.

The long patrols of the 1920's marked the end of an era. Ships and planes began to be used. By the end of the 20's suddenly everything is opening up. It ended the mystique of the North. Once it was easy to move around, no one cared about the North. While many people like to read about the feats of the police in the North, which did so much to establish the sovereignty of our country in the North, in my mind the Inuit are just as responsible for that sovereignty as the police were.

## CABINETMAKERS OF NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY - 1820-1870

Felicity Nowell-Smith

The purpose of this paper is to compile a list of the cabinet-makers of Bowmanville, Cobourg and Port Hope; to establish their working dates and wherever possible to show illustrations of their work.

The secondary purpose is to describe the social and economic context in which they worked. This puts the work of particular men in perspective and shows the relevance of their work to the wider field of nineteenth century Ontario cabinetmaking.

The state of cabinetmaking in an area is a reflection of the area's socio-economic development; thus Section 1 describes this development in the Three Towns in the nineteenth century.

Section 2 describes the cabinetmakers as a group. Here such questions are asked as: Do they come from any particular country? How old and how wealthy are they? Do they show the same patterns of mobility as the rest of Ontario society in the nineteenth century?

The Cabinetmakers at Work, Section 3, describes their working conditions - where they worked, the power available to them, the tools they used and the number of employees. In this section I discuss changes in the nature of cabinetmaking which occurred in this period. The development of Bowmanville, Cobourg and Port Hope as small urban centres began at the same time as the trade was going from the workshop to the factory stage. I discuss the meaning of hand-made versus factory-made with reference to the cabinetmakers I am listing.

Section 4 describes what they made: the types of furniture and the varieties of wood used. I answer such questions as: how did they sell their product, did they advertise or not? How did they respond to fashion?

The days of the individual cabinetmaker in Ontario were limited by the late development of urban demand and the ready adoption of factory styles and methods. That is, when population had grown sufficiently to demand and be able to buy new furniture, fashion and economic imperatives impelled factories to satisfy the demand.

Any paper and especially one of this nature is bound by the limitations of its sources. There is no useful documentary evidence for Bowmanville, Cobourg or Port Hope before the 1820's. So although pieces of furniture are believed to have originated there before 1820 there is no way of proving it yet. The researcher only has available material which happened to survive. For instance, the personal census of 1851 is missing for all three towns. And when it does exist the researcher is frustrated by a census taker who, for reasons of his own, failed to fill in answers to the listed questions, or whose handwriting is illegible. Newspaper runs are incomplete or non-existent for a particular time period.

Another type of evidence is negative evidence, that is the absence of evidence which in itself has meaning. For example, the fact that most cabinetmakers did not sign their work reveals something of the low status of the trade. Even a man like William Furby who is mentioned in the Canadian Biographical Dictionary and worked long in Port Hope appears not to have signed his work. These difficulties and disappointments with sources, however, pale next to the excitement of actually finding a named piece of furniture of some distinction.

Archival material forms the backbone of this paper, therefore it approaches the subject of cabinetmaking from the opposite end of many furniture books. These illustrate a wide variety of pieces made in a province, county or town which are often dated on the basis of various criteria, especially style. The strength of archival research is that it provides a corrective to this method of dating.

Archival sources reveal the names and working dates of cabinetmakers. It is possible to find out the detail of their lives from the size of their households to their childrens' school attendance, which would indicate their social status; and to estimate the size of their workshops and output. This detail, meaningless by itself, provides the underpinnings of a clearer understanding of the nature of the cabinetmaking business in Ontario preceding wide-spread industrialization. This understanding can then be applied when examining any signed pieces of furniture which have been discovered. They can then be seen in the context of their socio-economic environment.

### Section 1

The conditions for a flourishing cabinetmaking trade are a monied market, skill and technology and availability of materials. Ontario, and the three towns I am discussing had the latter, but by the time popular demand had developed the days of the individual craftsman were numbered. The cabinetmaker in his shop was in no position to compete with the cheap mass products of the factories and indeed the public, inspired by advertising, came to demand the modern "progressive" factory products. The irony of the Ontario situation was that in the early days as a new colony she was regarded as a dumping ground for British goods and by the time the population was rich and large enough to constitute a real market for furniture the industry had become mechanized, squeezing out the individual craftsman.

Bowmanville, Cobourg and Port Hope resemble many other small Ontario towns in their development. The land in all three towns had been distributed by 1820, but settlement was sparse. In the pre-1820 period Ontario existed in a state of self-sufficient isolation. The colony's roads were notoriously bad and their condition helped to keep the low density population in this state, so that prior to 1820 urban development was negligible. Toronto and Kingston had populations of 1,250 and 2,300 respectively, while other

settlements were mere hamlets. Urban growth in the first generation had been centred in places of administrative importance, which preferably had trade and transport connections. There, there was a small demand for the work of the cabinetmaker, but in the rest of the colony there was no demand at all for the sort of services provided by a large city.

This situation altered in the 1820-1850 period when changes occurred in the economy of Upper Canada. This was the time of mass immigration from the British Isles, the development of trade with the United States and the beginning of mechanization of agriculture which all had an effect on the increased flow of capital in the colony. In the 1820's the three towns, Bowmanville, Cobourg and Port Hope started to grow. They all had good transport facilities (Port Darlington was the port for Bowmanville) and rapidly became the service and supply centres for their region. Their provision of social, commercial, transport and administrative services for their hinterland attracted people to live in them.

Like Bowmanville, Cobourg had been stifled in its development by absentee landowners but its situation as a port and administrative centre for the Newcastle District stimulated its growth. It was an entry port for settlers going to the Otonabee region and a place of retirement for half-pay officers. So much so that by 1830 it ranked third behind Kingston and Toronto with a population of 2,000. When Cobourg's wharves were built in the 1830's it developed an export trade in grain, flour and lumber and with the advantage of distance from Toronto it developed a significant import trade. The establishment of Upper Canada Academy (later Victoria College) in 1836 gave it importance as a seat of culture and learning. So it comes as no surprise to find that cabinetmakers responded to the needs of this population and established their workshops there. Indeed one of the first settlers in Cobourg was F.S. Clench, cabinetmaker in 1826. The quality of his work, his use of veneers and the specialized types of furniture he made reflect the economic prosperity of Cobourg in this 1820-1850 period.

The economic development of Port Hope and Bowmanville in this period is similar. Both doubled their populations between 1820 and 1850 and increased in prosperity as their hinterlands were developed. And as in Cobourg, one of Port Hope's earliest settlers was a cabinetmaker in 1826, one William Furby.

As the centres of population grew, passing from self-sufficiency to a market economy the barter system which had flourished before 1820 began to give way to cash payments. This happened earlier in some places than others but because I found only one reference to payment in kind I feel it had largely died out by the 1830's in Cobourg. However, it was still practised in Port Hope in 1847 and for an unknown length of time in Bowmanville. But it does seem that cash was still scarce into the late 1840's judging by the number of advertisements offering reduced rates for cash payment.

The period 1850-1870 is characterized by the development of the railways. The greatest effect on the cabinetmaking trade was felt

in the towns with the best railway communications. There developed furniture manufacturing on a factory scale (Bowmanville and Port Hope), whereas in Cobourg the trade remained at the craftsman/workshop stage.

The conditions for a flourishing cabinetmaking trade (market, capital and urban centres) developed after 1820. The early importance of Cobourg is reflected in the number of early cabinetmakers making a wide diversity of types of furniture, and in the case of Bowmanville the reverse is true. Port Hope, the commercial rival to Cobourg, overtook her in the 1850's and 1860's because of better transport facilities. There the nature of the cabinet making trade, which had until then paralleled that of Cobourg, changed to include factory manufacturing of furniture.

## Section 2

This section is concerned with the cabinetmakers themselves. Who they were, where they had come from, the circumstances in which they lived and their place in mid-nineteenth century society.

Michael Katz in his book about Hamilton argues for "the centrality of transiency to the nineteenth century". He describes nineteenth century society in Ontario as a society in continual motion. Not only do immigrants arrive and search for work but the native population is also on the move; so that only about one-third of the population at any time will still be living in the same place ten years later. What connection does this have with the cabinetmakers in the three towns? It serves as an important explanation for the many names which only appear once in archival records, that is the names of men which cannot be linked. For instance in Cobourg two-thirds of cabinetmakers listed in the 1861 census (14/21) appear to vanish; they do not exist in any other source. Some may have died but I suspect that most conformed to typical patterns of transiency and moved on to somewhere else. One cabinetmaker I did manage to trace, however, a Richard Hawkey, had moved to Bowmanville where he continued to work.

The men who persist in one place, who can be linked from Assessment roll, to Census return, to a Directory have certain characteristics in common. They own their houses, have a least \$1000 invested in machinery or real estate and they employ at least one other person. They are obviously staying in the area because of moderate to great financial success. They have somehow managed to "corner the market" in cabinetmaking and do not need to drift on, searching for the good life. The persisters in all three towns tend to belong to the dominant ethnic group of that town and some are related to successful cabinetmakers nearby. For instance in Cobourg, the 1861 persisters Freeman Clench, George Stephens and Matthew Hobart are all American, this reflects the nature of the early settlement there. In Port Hope the dominant cabinetmakers in 1861, Frederick Honor, H.C. Russell and John Walker are Irish. H.C. Russell is the son of George H. Russell who had "upholstery and Cabinet ware-rooms" in Cobourg in the 1840's. In Bowmanville in 1861 there is the

Irishman John Fee and Robert Manning, the first dominant cabinet-maker to have been born in Upper Canada. Manning was trained in Port Hope by his uncle, William Furby who had come from Scotland.

It is difficult to estimate the wealth of the persistent cabinetmakers without comparing their household structures, investments, property ownership with that of the rest of the towns' population. But it can be shown that the persistent cabinetmakers behaved in the way described by Michael Katz as demonstrating affluence. That is, they lived in two or three storey houses, surrounded by a large plot of land, their children attended school for continuous periods of time and their household size was increased by the presence of servants, relatives and/or boarders. The boarders in the cabinetmakers families were young, unmarried cabinetmakers who presumably worked for the head of the household.

Another feature of the cabinetmaking trade, and indeed of the pre-industrial workplace, was the regularity in which sons followed their father's occupation. These are a few examples from Cobourg: George H. Russell is in partnership with his son William in 1847, Freeman Clench is joined by his sons Thomas and William who eventually form their own company and Matthew Hobart is joined by his son Sidney.

A further feature of the trade, reflecting the uncertainty of demand for their products was the combination of cabinetmaking with other jobs. The early cabinetmakers in all three towns made coffins and kept a hearse for hire as the occasion demanded, while William Furby was the owner and publisher of the local Port Hope newspaper.

### Section 3

What was the workplace like for the nineteenth century cabinet-maker? The furniture industry had roughly three phases of development; the domestic, the workshop and the factory. In Ontario this development occurs in one century - the nineteenth. The domestic stage corresponds to the period of early settlement when lack of money and isolation forced settlers to make their own furniture.

The workshop stage of development was reached earlier in Cobourg and Port Hope and overlaps in Bowmanville with the factory stage. The workshop was developed in response to local demand by clients.

In the very small business the workshop might be in the dwelling house. It was more usual, however, to house it in a building of its own, which if the business was big enough would be on separate property/street from the dwelling house. As long as cabinetmaking occurred in this workshop setting the woodworking operations were all combined. That is, there was little specialization. The exception to this was chairmaking which had long been distinct from cabinet or case-piece making. I do however include chairmakers in my listings because they are part of the woodworking trade and the development of the furniture industry. However, the men I called "persisters" in 1861 in Section 2 of this paper (Robert Manning of Bowmanville, F.S. Clench, George Stephens, Matthew Hobart of Cobourg, W.F. Rus-

sell, John Walker of Port Hope) employed from two to five other men and therefore I find it hard to believe that some degree of specialization did not take place. Indeed W.F. Russell had power beyond that of the human hand - his water powered machinery was valued at \$2000, and he appears to have operated on factory lines.

The movement from workshop to factory production which started in Ontario c.1850 depended on the availability of power-driven machinery and a transport network to distribute the products to a growing population. I do not intend to discuss the history of the furniture factory as it developed but because the workshop and factory stage overlap in the 1850-1870 period I must consider some aspects of factory work.

What was its essential characteristic? I think it was marked by a change in the nature of the work. The workers specialized in a particular aspect of the trade and made component parts of the piece of furniture rather than, as formerly, seeing a piece through from conception to completion. Thus in 1853 W.F. Russell who is setting up his business advertises for men with the following trades: cabinetmaking, upholstering, finishing, chairmaking, carving and turning. In 1861 he has an annual output worth \$10,000 compared with Matthew Hobart who, lacking water-powered machinery and operating in a workshop setting, has an annual output worth \$4,000.

There is today discussion about what distinguishes the hand-made from the machine-made. Lilly Koltun points out in "The Cabinetmakers Art in Ontario" that factory production was still highly labour intensive and involved hand assembly and finishing by skilled craftsmen. Whereas, she continues, the workshop cabinetmaker would make use of whatever kind of tools he could lay his hands on. At the Paris Exposition of 1855 Canadian entries included "Tools in great variety for cutting, polishing and manufacturing of woods." The use of tools, driven initially by foot or hand or perhaps water-power, vastly increased the amount of furniture which could be made at a time and furthered decorative possibilities. And certainly established workshop cabinetmakers had no qualms about selling factory products in their shops. F.S. Clench is known to have bought a large number of items from the Bowmanville Manufacturing Company in 1869 for eventual resale from his shop.

#### Section 4

In this section I answer such questions as : what did the cabinetmakers of the three towns make? What woods did they use, what influenced their work and how did they sell it?

Information about what they made is gained mostly from advertisements, local histories and the surviving signed or avouched for pieces of furniture themselves. By avouched for I mean such items as those owned by the great-granddaughter of F.S. Clench, which were made for his family and were therefore not marked with his stencil or signature, or the items made for the Masonic Lodge by Robert Manning in 1853. These are pieces which come with an oral history

of provenance behind them.

F.S. Clench's output, as revealed in the account book he kept of funeral charges included a partial list of work made out in 1850: "1 walnut table, 1 small coffin, bureau, dining table, two washstands, coffin, 2 bedsteads, dressing table, 2 picture frames, tray stand, bedstead, 2 bureaus, table. For years when newspapers were published and survived, advertisements, such as this one from the Cobourg Star, July 12 1841, give a good deal of the wide range of furniture available:

"British Cabinet, Chair and Upholstering Warerooms, Division Street, have on hand or make to order sideboards, sofas, book cases, wardrobes; centre, pier, pembroke, card, toilet, dining and breakfast tables; bureaus of every description; also a variety of French, Grecian and reclining chairs; enclosed and common washstands, children's cots and cradles, looking glasses, state, tent and french bedsteads etc. curtains & carpets cut and made to order.

G. Walker and A. McMorphi"

Advertisements also indicate the varieties of wood being used. As early as 1831 in Cobourg, which was a major importer of goods, mahogany is mentioned together with the native cabinetmaking woods of black walnut, curled maple and cherry.

A large number of the cabinetmakers of Port Hope and Cobourg advertised in the local newspapers. In Port Hope 17% did, as compared with 30% of the Cobourg men. The difference in the figures may only reflect the fact that a longer run of Cobourg papers (1931-1878) survives than that of Port Hope (1831-1854).

An analysis of the content of the advertisements shows several things. First, there was a concern with being in fashion and a desire to inform the reading public the cabinetmaker had adopted the latest style. Second, is the realization that cabinetmakers kept ware-houses of furniture made elsewhere for resale, as well as making commissioned pieces. Third, an alternative method of sale is revealed. F.S. Clench in 1835 organized the "Cobourg Furniture Lottery". The difficulty he had in selling his tickets is hinted at in the advertisement in the Cobourg Star, July 14 1835:

"Positively the last adjournment, the undersigned, proprietor of the Cobourg Furniture Lottery, regrets that the number yet remaining on his hands, compels him again to postpone the drawing of this lottery. He however pledges himself that on Thursday the 20th August next it shall positively take place; as he will then assume all unsold tickets at his own risk.  
F.S. Clench."

This form of sale was presumably a valiant effort to raise cash and clear out a lot of stock.



The manner in which cabinetmakers responded to fashion is most clearly shown by examining the illustrations of F.S. Clench's work. The examples of his work spanning forty years (1830-1870) show how he moved from Empire derived styles through to Renaissance revival work.

A challenge for further research would be to build on mere checklists and document the body of work of individual cabinetmakers.

AN EVENING WITH CATHARINE PARR TRAILL

Barbara Garrick

Norma Martin

Donna McGillis

and

Judy Weller

BARBARA: There are three main reasons for choosing Catharine Parr Traill as a figure of historic significance. Firstly, I find her life story tremendously inspirational. Secondly, she is an important writer and naturalist of pioneer times. Thirdly, her experiences reveal much of the history of this locale and the social relations of her time.

Catharine Parr Traill certainly deserves to be honoured for her courageous and untiring struggles in the backwoods of our region. Throughout the sixty-seven years of her life in Canada she faced continuous poverty, endless personal tragedies and constant physical hardships without succumbing to either physical illness or emotional depression. As she said of herself, "I think I have the happy faculty of forgetting past sorrows and only remembering the pleasures". In her early years of pioneering Catharine saw their savings dwindle, their land lost to creditors and their personal possessions destroyed by flames when their home, Oaklands, between Gore's Landing and Sully, burned. Yet, she was able to continue with the onerous tasks of raising a large family. In the midst of her greatest difficulties and the drudgeries she faced daily, Catharine had the presence of mind and the enthusiasm for life to create imaginative stories for children, a practical guide for other immigrants, and to compile a collection of local flora that earned her world wide recognition. We must, I think, investigate the circumstances of her early life and the characteristics of her adjustment to life that allowed her to be not only a successful pioneer, but one of Canada's most able writers.

Catharine was born in 1802 near London, England, where her father, Thomas Strickland, was the manager of the Greenland Docks. Successful in his business investments, Strickland purchased a large estate, Reydon Hall, near Sothwold in Suffolk, for his wife and daughters, Eliza, Agnes, Sarah, Jane, Katie and Susanna, and his sons, Sam and Tom.

NORMA Q. 1. Mrs. Traill, your childhood home, Reydon Hall, was large and gracious with servants and yet your family lived simply, even austerely. Could you describe your life there?

CATHARINE: Breakfast was served at exactly 8:00, and as usual consisted of mother's oatmeal boiled in milk and a slice of dry bread. Sometimes I wished it would vary, perhaps a little butter or sugar, or some tea. However, I would never complain and I always ate it, because we did not get anything more until dinner at 2:00 p.m.

After breakfast I finished my day's work in the kitchen, dairy and the still room. Mother wanted me to know how to do the work and not just tell the servants to do it.

NORMA Q. 2. Your parents were cultured people with progressive ideas for their family's education. Tell us something about your father's instruction.

CATHARINE: Papa said that just because we were females we did not need to be only decorative. He wanted us to develop our brains to the best of our ability.

I enjoyed spending time in Papa's library. He had fascinating books on travel and philosophy. Books were our best friends. We were able to read by the time we were six. I've read Descartes, Newton, Locke and Wordsworth. He had a wonderful book on the history of the Reformation, and Shakespeare was always a good friend. I had been acting out scenes from Shakespeare since I was two years old.

Papa was proud of our achievements. Since our education had not been superficial, and we had been encouraged to converse rationally, we were able to talk with anyone of high or low degree.

NORMA Q. 3. You enjoyed walks with your father in the countryside around the village of Southwold. Was it on these excursions that he encouraged your skills of observation and love of nature?

CATHARINE: Yes. Papa did not make us learn all our lessons from books. He taught us the names of all the rocks and flowers that we collected. "Don't just look; observe closely and remember." Papa said that hundreds of times. It gave me great delight to sit with Papa under the ash tree on the riverbank and discuss the flowers, trees and birds that surrounded us. I learned to press flowers and I enjoyed mounting them. I wished that I were better at mounting them.

NORMA Q. 4. Was there anyone else who encouraged your interest in natural science?

CATHARINE: Yes, Punch. How knowledgeable Punch was about the world of living things! Punch was the son of the bailiff on our estate and he spent much of his time helping his father. He could not even read or write but he knew the names of every plant, the habits of the animals and insects and the whereabouts of dozens of birds' nests. I learned so much from him.

DONNA Q. 5. Did you feel isolated living on such a remote estate?

CATHARINE: Reydon Hall where we moved when I was a child is an Elizabethan mansion which stands a long way back from the road. My first view of it was in December with the cold wind blowing off the North Sea through the trees. Our neighbours were few, and not of our class. The bailiff, the gardener and their families lived in the double cottage on the estate. The Earl of Stradbroke lived in Reydon Wood, an estate north of us.

We saw little of the Earl since we were not really "county". Papa made his money in business. The local well-to-do farmers resented Papa's farming innovations - his new fanning mill to clean the chaff from the wheat and his new crop of Swedish turnips.

My sisters and I wanted to teach the labourers' children to read, but we met with much opposition and little success. We entertained ourselves at the Hall, but it is steeped in so much history that it was easy to pass the time. My sisters and I explored the Hall and the surrounding countryside with much enthusiasm. Agnes could tell fascinating blood-stirring tales about the area.

We were often left alone at Reydon Hall and my three sisters insisted that we learn to use Papa's pistols. Loton, our gardener, was horrified at the idea of ladies using firearms. My sister, Thay, however, told him that his house was too far away from the Hall for protection. He relented and allowed us to keep loaded firearms in the house when he felt we were capable of using the pistols. We were glad of the protection one night when we heard a prowler. Thay and I shot out the upstairs window and frightened him away. That is the only time we had been bothered. We were quite proud of the fact that we had proven that we could take care of ourselves.

DONNA Q. 6. When did you and your sisters begin to write?

CATHARINE: The winter weeks at Reydon Hall could be lonely and dull so Susanna and I began to write stories. We wrote in secret because Papa did not approve of novels. He said that it is respectable to read them, but he would never approve of our writing them. We were almost stopped from our endeavour before we had begun, since we had no paper and it was a very precious commodity - one not to be wasted frivolously. Fortunately, Thay was willing to help us. She remembered some old blue letters stored in a trunk. There were even some quills ready cut. With one of Papa's cakes of India ink we were able to begin. Many nights were spent reading what we had written. Susie's story, an heroic tale about the Thirty Years' War, was finished quickly. My love story was muddled and I was terribly discouraged when Thay gave me some good advice. She said that one should write about what one knows about.

My next story was much better. It was a story for children about what I knew best - the animals and birds that I see in the fields.

Our writing endeavours ended quickly when Mother and Eliza found out. Susie's story was thrown in the fire. I was told to cut mine up for curl papers.

DONNA Q. 7. But were you not very young when your first book of stories was published?

CATHARINE: Yes, I was only sixteen when The Blind Highland Piper was published. I used to visit the market town of Norwich and found the activity there stirred my imagination. The sheep drovers playing their pipes as they passed by led me to write that story. The ragged urchin who carried the water pails was my inspiration for The Little Water Carrier. A tiny mouse that I watched in the park became Little Downy, the Field Mouse.

I was extremely surprised when, instead of being punished for writing these stories, I received five guineas from Harris, the publisher. How astonishing that someone would pay me to do something which I did just for the pleasure!

BARBARA: Until 1818 the Strickland sisters had enjoyed a life of stimulation within the bounds of a family life supported by the investments of their rather unorthodox, but certainly brilliant, father. Then in the slump after the Napoleonic Wars, businesses began to fail and the Strickland wealth, which was based on the profits of Commerce and not on the ownership of lands, simply disappeared. They were poor! To add to this catastrophe, their loving father died suddenly.

NORMA Q. 8. Your father's death must have been a great shock for your family.

CATHARINE: Papa's death affected us greatly. We did not have enough money to be presented in society. We had no rich connections, so a good marriage for each of us was most unlikely. People who knew our circumstances predicted that we would live a life of poverty in the country.

Papa did leave us one gift - independence of thought. We did not have to be restricted by the society in which we lived just because we were poor.

NORMA Q. 9. How did you meet your husband, Thomas Traill?

CATHARINE: I met him at the home of my sister, Susanna and her new husband, Lt. John W. Dunbar Moodie, a fellow officer from the Royal Scots Fuseliers. Susanna and her husband were planning to emigrate to Canada.

Lt. Moodie's circumstances were as unsettled as ours. He was a younger son and his eldest brother would inherit the family estate, Melsetter, in Orkney. He had a classical education and was trained as an officer in the army. But there was no war for him to fight. He was not trained for any other type of living. Lt. Moodie could not live on the half-pay (to which he was entitled as a retired

officer) in the manner to which he was accustomed unless his brother provided him with an allowance.

DONNA Q. 10. Was this why Moodie and Thomas Traill chose to emigrate to Canada?

CATHARINE: Canada was a great enticement to retired officers on half-pay. Land was granted, social restrictions were fewer, and a gentleman with little money could invest in great tracts of land.

When I met Thomas he expressed the feeling of all the emigrating officers. He said, "Hundreds of half-pay officers are going. They're given a free grant of land, and can usually buy more. Upper Canada is rather empty of citizenry now, but will soon be populated with officers and gentlemen. These Canadas are our land of milk and honey".

NORMA Q. 11. So you sailed for Canada after your honeymoon at your husband's family estate, Westove, also in Orkney. Could you tell us about your voyage?

CATHARINE: After many delays and disappointments we set sail on the 7th of July, 1832, aboard the LAUREL. The LAUREL was not a regular passenger ship; it was much more comfortable. Thomas purchased an expensive passage for us to spare us the discomforts of an immigrant ship. We paid 15 pounds each for passage to Montreal. That was high but every expense was included. The only other available vessel bound for Canada was a passenger ship literally swarming with emigrants, chiefly of the lower class of Highlanders.

Our cabin was neatly fitted up, and I enjoyed the luxury, for such it was compared with the narrow berths of the state cabin.

I endured the horrors of mal de mer. When the weather was fine I paced the deck with my husband or sat on a bench on the deck and sewed. Women have always their needle as a resource against the overwhelming weariness of an idle life. When a man is confined to a small space such as a deck or cabin of a trading vessel with nothing to see, nothing to hear, nothing to read, he is really a very pitiable creature.

DONNA Q. 12. What were your first impressions of Canada?

CATHARINE: Once more on terra firma! What a strange sensation it was to tread the land once again, free from the motion of the heaving waters to which I was in truth, glad to bid farewell.

We were struck by the dirty, narrow, ill-paved or unpaved streets of the suburbs of Montreal. We were overpowered by the noisome vapour arising from a deep open fosse that ran along the street behind the wharf.

Every house of public resort was crowded from the top to the bottom with English, Irish and Scottish emigrants of all ages. The sounds of riotous merriment mingled with the ill-assorted haggard

careworn faces of many of the thoughtless revellers.

Cholera had made awful ravages and its devastating effects were to be seen in the darkened dwellings and the mourning raiments of all classes. I succumbed to the dread disease myself and was in extreme torture but was relieved by bleeding and by the violent fits of sickness that ensued. My sufferings were intense. We were delayed in Montreal for a time.

In some situations, whole streets had been nearly depopulated. Those that were able, fled panic-stricken to the country villages, while others remained to die in the bosom of their families.

I knew of no place, not even excepting London itself, where the exercise of benevolent feelings was more called for than these cities - Quebec and Montreal. Here we met together the unfortunate, the improvident, the helpless orphan, the sick, the aged and the poor virtuous man driven by the stern hand of necessity from his country and home, perhaps to be overtaken by sickness or want, in a land of strangers.

DONNA Q. 13. Did you meet anyone who tried to discourage you from remaining in Canada?

CATHARINE: Yes. There was one of my countrymen just returned from the western district on his way back to England. He entreated us, by no means to go farther up this horrid country, as he emphatically styled the Upper Province, assuring us he would not live in it for all the land it contained. Having read Cattermole's pamphlet on the subject of emigration, he had been induced to quit a good farm, to gather together what property he possessed and to embark to Canada. Encouraged by a friend in this country, he purchased a lot of wild land in the western district.

"But sir", said he, addressing my husband with much vehemence, "I found I had been most vilely deceived. such land, such country! I would not live in it for all I could see. Why there is not a drop of wholesome water to be got, or potato that is fit to eat. I lived for two months in a shanty, eaten up alive with mosquitoes. I could get nothing to eat but salt pork, and in short, the discomforts are unendurable. And then all my farming knowledge was quite useless - people know nothing about farming in this country. Why it would have broken my heart to work among the stumps and never see a well-ploughed field".

And then he added in a softer voice, "I thought of my poor wife and little one. I might for the sake of bettering my condition have roughed out a year or so myself, but poor thing, I could not have had the heart to have brought her out from the comforts of England to such a place, not so good as one of our cow-houses or stables and so I shall just go home; and if I don't tell all my neighbours what sort of country this is for which they are all so eager to throw up their farms, they will never trust a word of mine again".

BARBARA: To this point, we have learned about Catharine's life as part of the literary Strickland family with their reverses of fortune and death of their father, then her marriage to Thomas Traill and their voyage to Montreal.

Catharine's personality has revealed several traits which will stand her in good stead as she faces the problems and challenges of a settler in the backwoods of Upper Canada.

She was an attractive and charming young woman, trained in the arts of homemaking and familiar with the works of great writers. Her tutelage by a wise and supportive father encouraged her ever-growing and everlasting awareness of the beauties and intricacies of nature. Her greatest asset, however, may have been her optimistic outlook and indomitable spirit.

Her father also encouraged her to observe, to reason and to converse with both the privileged and the ordinary folk. Thomas Strickland thus proudly addressed his daughters:

Few ladies of the present day know how to converse rationally because they've been taught in a superficial manner. You girls could talk with anyone of high or low degree, so your education has been worth the occasional struggle with stubborn young minds.

Catharine's responses to life in Canada now becomes the focus of this interview - how she treated the people she met and how she reacted to a harsh pioneer life.

NORMA Q. 14. Mrs. Traill, when did you arrive in Cobourg and what was your reaction to the town?

CATHARINE: After a horrendous stagecoach journey from Lachine to Cornwall we boarded a steamer to take us to Cobourg. We arrived in Cobourg at 10 o'clock the morning of the 29th of August, 1832, fifty-three days after we left Scotland.

I expected to see another bustling Montreal. Instead, I could see from one end of the town to the other. I felt that we had entered the backwoods already.

There were several good families living there. They seemed to be a most genteel society. The working men, however, were almost rude. They had little respect; not only did they speak back to me, but they offered advice. Imagine a working man back home being so presumptuous! Here, not only did I find myself listening to them, but also replying. Thomas said that it was the republican influence of the Yankees.

The village of Cobourg was the metropolis of the Newcastle District. It had a weekly paper, several stores and mills and an attractive church.



I tried to post a letter to my brother, Sam, in Douro when we first arrived in Cobourg. The postmaster told me that it would take two or three weeks to get a letter into the back country. There is no regular postal service; letters must be delivered by someone travelling into the backwoods. It will take Thomas and I only three days to reach Sam at Lake Katchewanooka.

NORMA Q. 15. The beautiful scenery and views of Hamilton Township on your journey north to Sully at Rice Lake must have been a welcome experience.

CATHARINE: Yes. About halfway between Cobourg and Rice Lake there is a pretty valley between two steep hills. There was a good deal of cleared land and a tavern; the place is called Cold Springs. I thought at the time, "Who knows but some century or two hence this spot may become a fashionable place of resort to drink the waters. A Canadian Bath or Cheltenham may spring up where now Nature revels in her wilderness of trees".

We ascended the Rice Lake Plains - a fine elevation of land - for many miles scantily clothed with oaks, and here and there bushy pines, with other trees and shrubs. Our companion in the stagecoach explained that the Plains were once very heavily wooded, but for generations, the Indians have burnt off the vegetation to prevent the growth of timbers. Sufficient trees were left to form coverts; for the deer resorted hither in great herds for the sake of a peculiar tall sort of grass, called deer grass, with which these plains abounded. In fact, the Indian name for Rice Lake is PEMEDASHCOU-TAYANG, the lake-of-the-burning-plains.

DONNA Q. 16. The Rice Lake area reminded many British settlers of their homeland.

CATHARINE: It reminded me of the hilly part of Gloucestershire. A number of exquisite flowers and shrubs adorned the Plains, which rival any garden in beauty during the spring and summer months. Many plants were peculiar to the Plains and were rarely met with in any other situation. The trees, too, though inferior in size to those in the forest, are more picturesque, growing in groups or singly, at considerable intervals, giving a sort of park-like appearance to this portion of the country.

My first view of Rice Lake totally enchanted me. For years that lovely lake haunted my memory and I longed to return to it and fondly cherished the hope that one day I might find a home among its hills and vales - and fourteen years later we did return.

DONNA Q. 17. Were there dwellings along the lakeshore?

CATHARINE: There were some fine settlements on the south shore of Rice Lake, but I was told the shores were not considered healthy, the habitants being subject to lake-fevers and ague, especially where the ground is low and swampy. These fevers and agues were supposed, by some people to originate in the extensive rice beds which caused a stagnation in the water surface. The mass of decay-

ing vegetation must have had a bad effect on the constitution of those who were immediately exposed to its pernicious influence.

NORMA Q. 18. How did you cross Rice Lake?

CATHARINE: We boarded the steamer, PEMADASH, owned by Mr. Bethune of Cobourg. It was the first steamboat on Rice Lake. The PEMADASH carried us across the lake and up the Otonabee River to Peterborough. This apology for a steamboat formed a considerable contrast with the superbly-appointed vessels we had lately been passengers in, on the Ontario and the St. Laurence. But the circumstances of a steamer at all on the Otonabee was a matter of surprise to us and of exultation to the first settlers along its shores. The PEMADASH had no cabin, was only half-decked and, though driven by a steam propeller, she carried a small sail. Evidently her Captain, Mr. Cleghorn, was none too sure of his engine.

The little steamer was crammed with passengers and produce. I was fortunate that Thomas found me a seat on a bench where I could observe the life on the steamer and along the banks of the Otonabee River.

DONNA Q. 19. After you arrived in Douro Township near Lakefield we know that you lived with your brother, Sam Strickland, for a short time then you moved into your own house on Lake Katchewanooka. Tell us what life was like in your first backwoods home.

CATHARINE: Our first dwelling was a simple log house which we called Lake House. It was made homey with my pretty curtains at the windows and articles set about from our trunks.

Although four of our children were born at Lake House and there was much to occupy me indoors, I never wearied strolling about, climbing the hills in every direction, to catch some glimpse of a new prospect or gather some new flowers.

I consider this country opens a wide and fruitful field to the enquiries of the botanist. I regarded this study as highly interesting to those who, living in the bush, must necessarily be shut out from the pleasure of a large circle of friends, and the resources of towns and cities.

NORMA Q. 20. Would you have some advice for new settlers in the backwoods?

CATHARINE: Many immigrants who went back into any of the unsettled townships are dispirited by the unpromising appearance of things about them. They found none of the advantages and comforts of which they had heard and read, and they were unprepared for the difficulties; some gave way to despondency and others quit the place in disgust.

A little reflection would have shown them that every rod of land must be cleared of the thick forest of timber before any returns could be obtained; that this required time and much labour and, if

hired labour, considerable outlay of ready money; and in the meantime a family must eat. If a distance from a store, every article had to be brought over the bad roads, either by hand or with a team, the hire of which was generally costly. Now, these things are better known beforehand, and then people are aware of what they have to encounter.

DONNA Q. 21. Was your own situation far from a village or town?

CATHARINE: Yes. Our greatest inconveniences arose from the distance at which we were placed from any village or town where provisions had to be procured, and the bad state of the roads.

You might send down a list of groceries to be forwarded when a team came up and when we examined our stores, behold, rice, sugar, currants, pepper and mustard all jumbled into one mess. What think you of a rice pudding seasoned plentifully with pepper, mustard and maybe a little rappee or Prince's mixture added by way of sauce?

NORMA Q. 22. How did you react to the Canadian winters?

CATHARINE: Though the Canadian winter has its disadvantages, it also has its charms. After a day or two of heavy snow the sky brightens, and the air becomes exquisitely clear and free from vapour. The smoke ascends in spiral columns. Seen against the saffron-tinted sky of any evening, or early of a clear morning, when the hoar-frost sparkles on the trees, the effect is singularly beautiful.

The tops of the stumps looked quite pretty, with their turbans of snow. A blackened pine stump with its white cap and mantle would often startle you into the belief that someone is approaching you thus fancifully attired.

DONNA Q. 23. Did you make maple sugar from your trees in the early spring?

CATHARINE: Yes. I took rather an active part in our sugar-making. Our experiment was on a very limited scale, having but one kettle, besides two iron tripods. But it was sufficient to initiate us into the art and mystery of boiling the sap into molasses, and finally, the molasses into sugar.

NORMA Q. 24. Did you have any interaction with the native peoples?

CATHARINE: The natives appeared to me to be of gentle nature and amiable dispositions and as far as our experience went, they are very honest. Once, indeed, an old hunter obtained from me some bread, for which he promised to give a pair of ducks, but when the time came for payment and I demanded my ducks, he looked gloomy and replied with characteristic brevity, "No duck - Chippewa gone up the lake with canoe - no canoe - duck by-and-by". By-and-by is a favorite expression of the Indians, signifying an indefinite point of time; maybe it means tomorrow, or a week, or month, or it may be a year, or even more. They rarely give a direct promise.

As it is not wise to let anyone cheat you if you can prevent it, I coldly declined any further overtures to bartering with the Indians until my ducks had made their appearance.

On another occasion I recall an amusing scene in William Brown's store at Gore's Landing. The store was a general rendezvous for both busy folk and idlers. The storekeeper was a collector of birds. The Indian hunters were his best customers, trading their furs and game for tobacco, groceries and other necessities. Peter Anderson, from the Rice Lake Indian Village, which people now call Hiawatha, was a picturesque figure as he marched into the store, gun in hand and clad in his blanket coat and red sash, especially, as drawn through this red sash hung a beautiful hawk owl. Everyone exclaimed, "What a beauty!" But Peter, taking it from his sash, flung it on the counter with a word that did not sound at all nice and continued with, "Ugh! Shoot no more hawk owl. He like to kill me!"

Peter went on to describe how when he was out hunting for something for dinner and not meeting with success, he shot a hawk owl in a cedar swamp. He guessed that William Brown would give him something for the specimen. He drew the bird through his sash; however, the bird was not dead and it dug its beak and claws into his back.

Peter described the agony of trying to get his beak out of his backbone and yelling for help. His brother, John, came and said, "Cut him's head off!" Still it was hard work to remove the beak from his back. Peter swore he would never shoot a hawk owl or an eagle ever again.

Poor Peter, I do not think he quite approved of the peals of laughter with which his story was received. However, Peter was comforted by a small gift and a plug of tobacco.

**BARBARA:** In 1839 the Traill family sold Lake House and moved to the Ashburnham area of Peterborough. A few years later they purchased a farm in Otonabee Township which they lost through an unfortunate investment on behalf of a neighbour.

In 1846, now blessed with six children, they moved to Wolf Tower on the south shore of Rice Lake, west of Gore's Landing. Wolf Tower was lent to them by the Rev. Mr. George Bridges who admired Catharine's book, The Backwoods of Canada, published in 1836.

**CATHARINE:** When I came to reside at Wolf Tower in the spring of 1846, I came in weak health, having scarcely recovered from a long and terrible fit of illness. But so renovating did I find the free healthy air of the beautiful hills about the tower that in a very short time, I was quite strong and able to ramble about with my children among the picturesque glens and wild ravines of this romantic spot.

The children were never weary of climbing the lofty sides of the hills that surrounded the ravine, forming the bed of one of those hill torrents to which they have given the name of The Valley of the Big Stone from a huge mass or boulder of grey granite that occupies the centre of it. There on a Sunday we used to hold our church seated upon the fragments of water-worn stone under the shade of lofty wood-crowned hills among the roses and sweet-scented shrubs that formed the undergrowth of this sweet spot.

Although we had no servants, we were happier and healthier than we had been in years. It is no wonder that I love Rice Lake.

It was here I began to write Canadian Crusoes. I used the landmarks around Wolf Tower and Mount Ararat in my story about three lost children from Cold Springs.

DONNA Q. 25. Was Canadian Crusoes a true story?

CATHARINE: No, the story is fictional but the setting is that of the Gore's Landing area. I was inspired to write the tale from reading a real life experience in the Cobourg Star. A young girl, Jane Eyre, was lost on the Rice Lake Plains while picking berries with her family. After five days of searching by dozens of people including native people, she was found on the Rice Lake Plains, west of Plainville, near Cold Creek.

DONNA Q. 26. What is the significance of Mount Ararat?

CATHARINE: Mount Ararat was the focal point of Canadian Crusoes. It was our second home on the south shore of Rice Lake. The two-hundred acre farm was the highest elevation on the Rice Lake Plains. My husband was in treaty with the owner to purchase it when it was sold over his head, much to his disappointment.

Alas, we left behind a Traill treasure. When we were preparing our garden in the spring of 1848, our three year old son, Willie, planted my silver spoons with the Traill family crest bearing a lighthouse. They were never found.

Our ninth and last child, Walter, was born while we lived at Mount Ararat.

NORMA Q. 27. Was this your last home on Rice Lake?

CATHARINE: No. In May, 1849, we moved to Oaklands. We purchased Oaklands located midway between Gore's Landing and Sully on lot 11 in the 8th concession of Hamilton Township. It was formerly owned by Judge William Falkner. My daydream was realized. I could look toward the distant hills where I spent my first night on the Rice Lake Plains and could say as I then said, "Truly it is a fair and lovely spot".

The main interest in the area at the time was the possibility of spanning Rice Lake with a railroad bridge. The area began to boom and was named Harwood in 1855 after the man who owned the property at

the lakeside terminus of the railroad. When the line was completed the price of land sky-rocketed from \$3.00 to \$400.00 an acre and an advertisement in the Cobourg Star described the village lots as first-rate investment.

The settlers who had spent a few winters in the area said that the bridge would not survive for long. They said the current from the Otonabee River was too strong where it passed Tick Island. They feared that the ice floes in the spring would wash out the roadbed. Unfortunately, they were correct.

The railroad was also costly in human lives. Fourteen German labourers died of cholera. They were buried one mile south of Harwood beside the railroad bed. I felt moved to write a poem entitled "The Graves of the Emigrants".

NORMA Q. 28. Could you recite a few stanzas for us?

CATHARINE: I would be happy to oblige.

They sleep not where their fathers sleep,  
In the village churchyard's bound;  
They rest not 'neath the ivied wall  
That shades that holy ground;

Where, then, may rest those hardy sons,  
Who left their native shore  
To seek a home in distant lands  
Beyond the Atlantic's roar?

They sleep in many a lonely spot  
Where mighty forests grow;  
Where stately oak and lofty pine  
Their darkling shadows throw.

The wild bird pours her matin song  
Above their lonely graves;  
And far away in the stilly night  
Is heard the voice of waves.

Where moss-grown stone or simple cross  
Its silent record keeps,  
There, deep within the forest shade,  
The lonely exile sleeps.

DONNA Q. 29. Were you concerned about the effects of development on the natural environment?

CATHARINE: As a civilization extends through the Dominion, the cultivation of tracts of forest land and prairie destroys the native trees and the plants that are sheltered by them. Many of our beautiful wildflowers, shrubs and ferns will, in the course of time, disappear from the face of the earth and be forgotten.

NORMA Q. 30. In what ways were your years at Rice Lake significant?

CATHARINE: Those years were my most productive years as a published writer in Canada. My stories and books were well received in America and Britain.

In addition, I advanced my plant studies and made many collections of pressed specimens. These were also sold here and abroad.

Our family grew up at Rice Lake and our daughter, Annie, married Clinton Atwood and raised her family on the farm adjacent to ours.

I loved the setting of Oaklands and never tired of the views from that vantage.

Those years were, nevertheless, difficult ones. Although Thomas and the boys made improvements to the house, still it remained draughty and uncomfortable in winter. My ink would freeze as I wrote late at night wrapped in blankets. We suffered great hardships. There was our chronic shortage of money, illness, lack of education for the children, our deep disappointment when an expected inheritance failed to materialize, AND the depressed state of Thomas, my poor husband. He was solitary and lonely, quite unable to adjust to life in Canada. He was devastated by the loss of all his books in the fire at Oaklands.

We moved from Rice Lake in 1857 but I continued to visit Gore's Landing to stay with Annie and her growing family at Atwood Oaks. My dear little grandson, Henry, is buried in the Hillside graveyard of St. George's Church in Gore's Landing. I came down from Lakefield to prepare his body for burial. I placed a bouquet of pearly everlasting flowers in his tiny hands.

I have many happy memories of Gore's Landing where I enjoyed visiting the Gores, the Alfred Haywards, the Archibald Lampmans, the William Dalyses and the family of Lt. Col. Brown.

BARBARA: While at Oaklands Mrs. Traill finished Canadian Crusoes (which was published in 1852), also The Female Emigrant's Guide published in 1854 - the first how-to book published for women in Upper Canada. Lady Mary and Her Nurse appeared in 1856. As well, articles appeared in British and Canadian magazines such as the Anglo-American Magazine, Victoria Magazine and the Home Circle. Her numerous publications saved the family from a life of destitution and according to her daughter, Annie, "kept the pot boiling".

After the Traills left Rice Lake, Catharine continued her plant life studies for her monumental book, Canadian Wildflowers, published in 1868. She is Canada's first published naturalist.

Her beloved Oaklands on Traill Road burned in 1857 with the loss of all their possessions.

Thomas died a broken man in 1859.

Catharine moved to Lakefield under the protective eye of her brother, Samuel Strickland. There she spent the last forty-two years of her life.

In her later years Catharine Parr Traill travelled to Ottawa where she received recognition as a writer and naturalist. Among her colleagues she counted the eminent Sir Sandford Fleming; the Parliamentary Librarian, Fletcher; and the head of the Geological Society of Canada, George Macoun.

It can surely be said that Mrs. Traill lived up to, or even surpassed, her father's expectations. She did converse rationally and she did serve a worthwhile role in life. Her books served not only the interests of her contemporaries but have also left vivid descriptions of her life and times for posterity.

What I think is most important for us to recognize is that Mrs. Traill earned an international reputation and that her years at Rice Lake saw the greatest number of her Canadian works published.



## A FAMILY BUSINESS IN COBOURG

Rick Johns

Who knows what the oldest profession is? It's got to be Forestry. Trees have been around since Adam & Eve, after all there had to be a tree from which the apple came from. I do not think so, they did not have chainsaws in those times. It may have been Engineering. It may have been an Engineer that developed the wheel, - No, I do not think so. It may have been the GIRL on the corner but we didn't have corners back when. It could have been a Pharmacist. Well, not really, Pharmacy existed to some degree - for instance a Shamen would have a potion to rid the body of the evil spirit that caused the trouble.

Pharmacy does have its history and will have its future. There are just a handful of Pharmacies in Ontario that are still run by the family. Geen's in Belleville. Albert Loft Geen purchased the Pharmacy in 1871 from Dr. Rafus Holden, who had established it in 1838 and continued under Percival Wiles Geen, the onto Alwyn Geen and now with P.W. Geen and A. Geen, showing four generations had been involved.

Then we have McLaren in Watford and it was established in 1868 and this has been run for 3 generations. Paterson's Drug Store in Owen Sound has been around since 1869 and existed for 3 generations. Thomas B. H. Taylor, London, Established in 1868 and originated such remedies as Taylors Throat Balm and Taylors Stomach & Liver medicine.

Oliver Giles Johns Sr. was born in Cobourg, a son of Mr. and Mrs. Jacob Johns of this town. He attended the Public School and Collegiate Institute here, and after completing his studies at the later took up the profession of druggist. He entered the Ontario College of Pharmacy in Toronto, from which he graduated in 1893, having previously served his apprenticeship in the drug business here with Mr. McGowan. In 1894 O.G.J. Sr. entered into business for himself.

O.G.J. married Minnie Victoria Downs of Brampton and had two children, Dorothea and Oliver Giles Johns Jr., both of which decided to take up the profession. Dorothea graduated in 1938 and O.G.J. Jr. in 1942.

In the year 1983, October 29, the Obituary read: SUDDEN PASSING OF GILES JOHNS. It was with most sincere sorrow that it was learned that O.G.J. Sr. prominent citizen and businessman of this town had been suddenly seized with a stroke. Mr. Johns had not been in good health for two years. After some weeks of hospital treatment he re-covered sufficiently to spend considerable time in conducting the business of his store, although during the summer months of late he spent much of his time at his cottage at Rice Lake.

A man of integrity and uprightness, of a gentle temperament, and with a kindly word for all, Mr. Johns was highly regarded by friends and acquaintances. Although his services were often sought after he had no desire to enter Public life and kept away from it, although

he served on Collegiate Institute Board for some years. Mr. Johns was a member of St. Peters Anglican Church and of the Masonic Order. He was fond of sports and a popular member of the Cobourg Curling Club. Years ago he served as president of the Cobourg Baseball Club, which shows his interest in the sport. He was an ardent sportsman, and the Moose & Caribou heads that adorn his store attest his keen aim as a hunter, while he was also very fond of fishing.

O.G.J. (Sr.) served his apprenticeship with Mr. McGowan and McGowan's predecessors were Mr. Will J. Porter (whose name appears on the cover of a United States Dispensatory edition dated by hand 1878,) and Mr. J.G. Templeton of Medical Hall.

Mr. J.G. Templeton was the founder of the OLD FAVOURITE T.R.C.'s. (Rheumatism, Arthritis Neuritic Pain)

Dorothea graduated in 1938 and O.G.J. Jr. graduated in 1942 and immediately enlisted with the Oshawa Tank Corp. and served overseas until the War ended.

Before leaving for overseas O.G.J. Jr. was married (Noreen Hanley) and the eldest son Paul was born before the War ended and Ron and myself later.

From 1938 till the return of O.G.J. Jr. the store was operated by Dorothea Johns, PhMB and Fred Woodly PhMB (deceased). Fred had come from Belleville. He had worked at the store until he retired 29 years later.

In the early days, Saturday was the busy day, stores stayed open until 10-11 p.m.. Many farmers came in before closing for their veterinary supplies, often horse powders, etc., had to be mixed according to their formulas in a large iron mortar. They often made you sneeze while preparing the mixture. Some favorite preparations were Mrs. Bulgers Drawing Salve; another well know lotion called Johns Lilac Cr. The old favourite, Lydia Pinkham's Vegetable Cmpd (for female problems), was made in Cobourg in a building at 90 University Avenue West. There was a well know slogan referring to this medication (A Baby in Every Bottle).

Beef Iron & Wine, various Cod Liver Oil preparations, Thermogen wool for poultices, linseed mustard & medicated plasters, were also popular - these were applied to the inflamed areas and left on till they dropped off.

Some customers had their own formulas and would ask for a nickels worth of this and 10 cents worth of that, others wanted five drops of an essential oil and 10 drops of another, to make up their own Sachets with Orris Root or Lavender flower.

Another popular once a year sale was STRAW HAT DYE to freshen up the Easter Bonnet. Beside this there were regular clothes dyes, Tintex, Dylace Diamond dyes, and Twink. There were no polyesters or nylons then and a lot of clothes were dyed or tinted to freshen them up.

One of the first face powders was Rice Flour which came in pink and white, only Colognes were limited to a few of the old favorites, Yardly's Lavender, Parma Violet, Sandalwood, Rose, Gardinia, and Lily of the Valley.

Another item made by hand was La Grippe Capsules, they were made up by hand by the hundreds every winter.

The most widely known product was Dr. Hayden's Stomach Medicine. There were many letters and phone calls for shipment and also praises for the benefit of the medicine. We even had requests from the Vatican, Florida and elsewhere, especially Quebec. As time went on some of the ingredients were unable to be purchased and the medicine had to be discontinued.

O.G.J. Sr., as stated earlier, was an avid sportsman and in 1900 he shot the largest moose in Ontario for that year. A picture of this was used on one of his store calendars and they were given away free in those days.

Many a pharmacist served his apprenticeship under the watchful eye of O.G.J. Sr. Mr. Chester Francey of Port Arthur was a grad of 1912, Fred (Bush) Hinman a grad of 1920, Mr. Luther Budd of Cobourg apprenticed in 1912 and went on to become the Ontario Sales Manager for Parke Davis & Co., Miss Nora McGowan apprenticed in 1918 to 1921 and graduated in 1923 and she spent 23 years as head Pharmacist of Royal Victoria Hospital in Montreal and then came back to Cobourg to work at the Ontario Hospital. Stewart Jacobs apprenticed in 1924 and went on to become Sales Manager of Burrough Wellcome, New York. Harold McMillan apprenticed in 1928 and was head of Missionary Pharmacists, North Nigeria, West Africa.

Today's education has changed substantially since the beginning of the Practise of Pharmacy. My grandfather was educated in Toronto by the Ontario College of Pharmacy for one year and the apprenticeship time probably lasted about 3-4 years under the supervision of another trained Pharmacist, and at that time was granted a licence. My Aunt Dorothea and my father spent two years at College and two years apprenticeship again under the supervision of a trained Pharmacist. When I took my course at University of Toronto I had to take four years of education and spent eight months apprenticeship between my second and third and third and fourth years through the summer months, then I was required to fulfill another four months internship upon graduation. Now the University Program is five years long.

Back in the 1900's there were no tablets or capsules already prepared for you, you had to Masserite & Triturate to get the end product. A lot of physical work, whereas to-day most prescriptions call for either a tablet, capsule, liquid or cream already prepared at the manufacturing level.

Unfortunately I was not around to know my grandfather and my information about him was supplied by my Aunt Dorothea.

## PROLOGUE TO A CELEBRATION

Lawrence F. Jones

During the 1986-1987 year, Mr. Jones continued his series of short talks on the events and conditions in the 1830's that led to Cobourg becoming a self-governing municipality on July 1, 1837. The series bore the title "prologue to a Celebration" - the celebration being the festivities commemorating the sesquicentennial of the incorporation of the Town of Cobourg in 1987.

The text of each historical vignette follows:

### Another Sesquicentennial - September 30, 1986

When I began these talks last January, I planned to take a few minutes each month to speak about some of the principal events and what life was like in Cobourg in the early and mid-1830's. I chose the 1830's because they provided the background for the momentous year 1837 when Cobourg was incorporated as a town and its citizens elected their first council---although it was not called a council, but a Board of Police. Nevertheless, it was in effect a council, and an elected one at that. I like to think that in the festivities of Cobourg's Sesquicentennial in 1987 we will be celebrating the 150th year of the first democratically elected municipal government more than we will be commemorating the 150th year since a name was changed, from village to town.

However, in my Prologue to a Celebration tonight, I want to change my course slightly and want now to talk about two other sesquicentennial occasions, both of them very much identified with the town, although they are being observed right now rather than next year. I am referring to Victoria College, which began as Upper Canada Academy 150 years ago in June of this year and which was honoured with a unique Royal Charter 150 years ago on October 6, next Monday.

It all began in 1829 when the Methodist Conference of Upper Canada decided to establish a residential seminary for the preparatory education of both male and female students.

Seventeen months later it was announced that the school would be in Cobourg and be called Upper Canada Academy.

Why Cobourg? Dr. Goldwin French, the president of Victoria University, gave one reason in a paper he gave a few years ago to the Cobourg and District Historical Society.

Dr. French said that Cobourg was chosen partly because of the freedom of the pupils from exposure to the temptations of a larger centre of population.

By the time Upper Canada Academy was open for classes, there were two larger centres of population than Cobourg in Upper Canada - York, with nearly 10 thousand people; and Kingston, with about five thousand.

Presumably the morals of the teenagers who would be attending classes at the Academy would be a lot safer in Cobourg, population about one thousand five hundred, than in the Sodom and Gomorrah of York and Kingston.

One shudders at the thought of what those young people would have been exposed to had their school been in the metropolis of the Province of Canada, the city of Montreal, population 33,000 in 1836.

Four to five years were to pass before the school building was erected because of prolonged difficulties in raising funds for the project, but at last the day came, on June 18, 1836, when the official opening of their school was marked with suitable solemnity.

The initial enrolment was about 40 students. There was an academic staff of seven: the principal, the lady principal, the preceptress (who seems to have been a teacher) and four masters, who taught Latin, Greek, History and English.

Three years went by before science was taught at the Academy and two years after that Upper Canada Academy became Victoria College.

On the official opening day there was a gathering of Methodist clergy, laymen, teachers and students in the Wesleyan Methodist church at Division and Chapel streets.

After prayers and a sermon, the congregation marched in solemn procession to the new building, where they filled the chapel and offered more prayers. The ritual of inauguration was entirely in keeping with the times.

One hundred and fifty years later, the University of Toronto Bulletin reported the events planned by today's Victoria College faculty, students, and alumni for their sesquicentennial.

The U of T Bulletin said that "Vic students, faculty, staff, alumni and friends can fill their calendars with activities", among them "dinner at the Harbour Castle Hilton...a bus tour to Vic's roots in Cobourg", a fund-raising 10 km run, breakfast and a walking tour of the Toronto campus, a high tea and a street dance for alumni, and a church service of thanksgiving.

It could be said that Vic's founders in Cobourg would have fitted easily into this 1986 program, except - horror of horrors! - that street dance.

On October 6, 1836, King William IV signed the Royal Charter for Upper Canada Academy. It was a unique charter because never before had the Crown granted privileges such as these to non-Anglican

institutions.

Goldwin French reported that "in the Charter it was stated that the Crown had had trouble defining Methodist or Methodist Conference. Strictly speaking, they did not exist as a religious institution.

#### The World Beyond - October 28, 1986

Before I go any further into the details of what life was like in Cobourg in the 1830's, I propose now to take a brief look at the nature of life beyond the boundaries of the village that was soon to become a town. What was happening in the world outside Cobourg,--- indeed, beyond Upper and Lower Canada---149 years or more ago, especially in the English-speaking world? I am sure it will help us to see people and events in better perspective here at home if we look at them against the background of the outside world.

At the beginning of the decade, 1830, King George IV died and was succeeded on the throne of Great Britain by William IV. He reigned only seven years and in 1837---that memorable year for Cobourg---his death brought William's 18-year-old niece Victoria to the throne. In the land to the south of the then Province of Canada, Andrew Jackson was President---and a tough one he was and well deserving of the nickname Old Hickory.

The United States of America had been independent of Great Britain for only 40 years when Jackson began his presidency in 1829. A year later, in 1831, the young nation surpassed its mother country in population: the U.S.A. had 12,800,000 people, Britain had 12,200,000. At the same time, Upper Canada reported a population of 237,000; Lower Canada 550,000.

Throughout the early 1830's, there was much debate, often angry in tone, over measures of reform that would, if enacted by Parliament, provide a greater degree of democracy in elections and, even if only a little, improve the lot of working people. The Reform Bill finally became law in 1832 and that eliminated all antiquated forms of franchise and extended the vote to many more citizens. They were male, of course---no one yet, except perhaps a feminist of her time--had thought or even dreamed of women having the right to vote.

In 1833 Parliament passed legislation that prohibited children under the age of nine from working in factories and limited the working day to nine hours for children between the ages of nine and thirteen. But the total abolition of child labour was still years way, although slavery was abolished in Britain in 1834 and in the colonies in 1835.

Finally, in the years of reform, between 1833 and 1835 various measures were adopted in Parliament through which city, borough and town councils were made elective in Great Britain. This in time became the practice in British colonies and Cobourg was to benefit

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by 1837.

It was an interesting and an exciting world in which much was happening. In 1830 J.J. Audubon published his Birds of America that was to become famous--and be worth a fortune. Louis Braille developed and perfected a system of characters that made it possible for the blind to read. A man was killed when struck by a train, and you may well ask, hasn't that sort of thing happened many times? But this was the first fatal railway accident ever, in 1830, on the very first railway line, from Liverpool to Manchester.

From 1831 to 1836 Charles Darwin served as a naturalist on the naval ship, the Beagle, which circled the globe on a scientific fact-finding expedition. Darwin worked his observations into his theory of evolution, which he developed and published in 1859, after years of work.

Samuel Morse was a successful artist and sculptor who left his American home to study art in London. In 1832 he became interested in science and by 1836 he had developed a magnetic telegraph apparatus so successful that it made commercial telegraphy possible.

Charles Dickens wrote his Pickwick Papers in the 1830's and Hans Christian Anderson his celebrated fairy tales. Three great authors were born in those years: Louisa May Alcott, famed for the writing of "Little Women"; G.A. Henty, writer of such books for boys as "With Clive in India" and "With Wolfe in Canada", and Samuel L. Clemens, who, as Mark Twain, wrote about Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn. The reading, in future years, was helped by Andrew Carnegie, born in 1835, who, from the many millions he gained in the steel industry, bestowed countless public library buildings on cities and towns in both the United States and Canada.

Finally, the American-born colonists in Texas revolted against their Mexican masters and proclaimed a republic, that came to be called the Lone Star state. No, it was not Dallas where the uprising occurred, nor was it Houston. It was San Antonio where it all happened---the Ewings had not yet even founded Dallas.

#### 'Direct Democracy' in Action - November 25, 1986

In Cobourg's Sesquicentennial year---which begins only 36 days from now---there are three particularly memorable dates: March 4, June 5, and July 1. It was on March 4, 1837, that the Legislature of Upper Canada finally passed "an Act to establish a Police in the Town of Cobourg and to define the limits of the said Town. "It was on June 5, 1837, that the first election was held to choose the first municipal council, called at that time the Board of Police. And it was on July 1, 1837, that the Town of Cobourg came into being, complete with elected council.

I want to emphasize that in 1987 we will be remembering and celebrating local democracy in action for the first time: the election of a town council (the Board of Police) and an election

each year thereafter. The importance of this can easily be overlooked. This happened in the Centennial observances in 1937, as reported in the Sentinel-Star. Centennial Week was not celebrated in March, or June, or on July 1; rather, it was observed on the last three days of July and the first two of August--well removed from the days of real significance.

Under a banner headline "Centennial Days---100 years young!", the Sentinel-Star said in a special issue on July 23, 1937: "Fun, frolic and festivity will be the watchword of the celebration.... During the five days there will not be a dull moment."

Certainly no one wants a dull moment, whether it be 100 years of history we are celebrating, or 150 years. But almost forgotten in 1937 was the real reason for the festivities: the formation of a town whose citizens would, for the first time, have something to say about the management of their own affairs.

The people of the villages of Cobourg and Amherst had cause to celebrate and also to breathe a collective sigh of relief. It had taken them four and a half years to bring about the wishes of the majority. There had been a series of town meetings at which the pros and cons of incorporation had been debated. The first such meeting was held on December 28, 1832, and the final assembly of citizens for discussion of the subject was on December 2, 1836---just 150 years ago next Tuesday. The bill for incorporation had been given first reading in the Legislative Assembly on March 11, 1835. Many months passed, and nothing happened, until the town meeting which turned out to be the final one.

On that occasion, just a century and a half ago, the citizens asked Asa Burnham, George Ham, and Andrew Jeffrey to stimulate action in Toronto. They did what had to be done, and three months later the bill of incorporation became law. The townsfolk had spoken at their town meetings and at last the provincial legislators paid attention.

Town meetings were then about the only way in which the people could make their wishes known, especially if they were reported in the local press. Such meetings were common, having been introduced to Upper Canada by United Empire Loyalists from New England, and, although they lacked the legislative power of their American counterparts, they played a useful role in the limited democracy of that time.

In his Dictionary of American Politics, Senator Eugene McCarthy, a leading political figure in the United States in the 1960's and 1970's, said a town meeting was "an old-fashioned assembly of an entire town's population, which acts as a legislature....this is direct democracy."

Certainly town meetings in Upper Canada did not act as legislatures, but they did exert influence and perhaps some degree of power. What we will be celebrating in the year ahead is, I think, a good example of direct democracy in action.

Life in Cobourg 150 Years Ago - January 27, 1987

All of us, I suppose, wonder at times what life must have been like in bygone days, long before such amenities as fast frozen foods, push-button telephones, and home computers had even been thought of. Let us take a few moments right now to see, if we can, what everyday life in Cobourg was like 150 years ago, as that memorable year 1837 began.

There were a thousand people living in Cobourg in 1830 and it passed in that year the population of its neighbouring village of Amherst. By 1837, when the two communities were united as one incorporated town, a census taken in January of that momentous year showed a count of 1,653 inhabitants. That's about the population of Colborne today and about half the size of present-day Campbellford. Eight years later, in 1845, Cobourg's population had more than doubled, to 3,347. By the way, there were 12 taverns in town then, and only six churches.

That is not surprising, because there was a "general taste for alcohol", as the historian George Glazebrook has pointed out. Whiskey was cheap and it was plentiful, and drunkards were a common sight on the streets and in the taverns.

Food in the average home was monotonous. There was an excessive amount of salt pork consumed, and beef tended to be tough. Men, and women too, worked long hours. The working day for a mechanic, tradesman, or labourer began at dawn and ended at sunset in the summer time. That long day was interrupted three times---at six a.m. for breakfast, 12 noon for dinner, and eight p.m. for supper. The 10-hour day looked most attractive to working people when they began to crusade for shorter hours later in the century.

The editor of the Cobourg Star noted in 1833 that "the name poverty is scarcely known among us", which was apparently quite true of 1837, especially among the entrepreneurs who for the most part were a flourishing class. I refer to such business men as Ebenezer Perry, James Gray Bethune, Benjamin Throup, Wilson S. Conger, Walter Boswell, William Weller, and George Bolton, and, in Amherst, the Burnham brothers.

Having achieved a united town, they turned their attention to other matters. There was much talk about building a railway from Cobourg to Rice Lake and thereby tapping the resources of the Peterborough area. There was also much talk about the need for a public market. But for many years, all that was done about these proposals was talk ---the market did not come into being until 1839 and the railway was not built and opened until the end of 1854.

When 1837 arrived, there were five churches in Cobourg: St. Peter's, the Wesleyan Methodist, Presbyterian, Congregational, and Bible Christians. Before the year ended, St. Michael's parish was founded and this year joined the town in commemorating 150 years of

life and service in the community.

As the population of the town began to increase in the early 1830's, there was an increasing need for schools. The town was divided into five school sections, each with a school, which usually was in the dwelling house of the teacher. The cost of elementary education was met in part from governmental grants and the remainder from quarterly tuition fees paid by the parents.

One important thing was missing in the early life of the town of Cobourg: a hospital, where the seriously ill or injured could be cared for. The nearest hospital was in Toronto. Fortunately the citizens of the new town appeared to be a healthy and a hardy lot, and they cheerfully survived the perils of the armed rebellion that was the climax of their founding year.

#### The Forgotten Man - February 24, 1987

When, at long last, the Legislature of Upper Canada passed the bill that united Cobourg and Amherst as one town with its own governing body, there had to be an election and that election was to be held on the first Monday in June. That was just three months after the legislation was approved on March 4, 1837.

One would have thought that there would have been great excitement in the two villages that were to become one town. Years had been spent on making the incorporation possible, and, when it was finally accomplished, it might have been expected that there would be much competition for positions on the Board of Police. The six-year-old Cobourg Star weekly newspaper paid little attention to the vote. Percy Climo in his "Early Cobourg" notes that the election was mentioned only three times in the Star: one on May 24, announcing the time and place of voting; another, on the same day, announcing the candidature of G.S. Boulton, (who, by the way, was not elected), and the third, a brief news item the week before the voting.

The official announcement of the Board of Police election bore the name of Henry Ruttan, he was the Sheriff of the District of Newcastle---had been for 10 years and was to continue in that position for 20 more years. It was his job to conduct the election "as the Law directs", as he put it.

Just who was Henry Ruttan, upon whom fell the responsibility of managing the first municipal election into the Cobourg area? One of our fellow members of the Historical Society, Matt Austin, did some research into the career of Henry Ruttan and concluded that he was one of history's "forgotten men". Certainly, if he has not been forgotten, he has indeed been overlooked.

Henry Ruttan was self-taught in large part and he was self-made. In his adult years he became a storekeeper, business man, entrepreneur, politician, soldier, inventor, and public servant. Ruttan was born in Adolphustown in the Bay of Quinte district in 1791. His

father was a United Empire loyalist. Henry grew up on his father's farm, then went to work for a merchant in Kingston and then Grafton.

He served in the militia in the War of 1812, was seriously wounded in battle, and was discharged with the rank of colonel. He was elected to the Legislative Assembly when he was only 29 and sat for two terms totalling nine years. Ruttan was appointed Sheriff while he was still a member of the Legislature, and while his last year as an M.L.A., was 1841, he did not retire as Sheriff until 1857.

In his final years of public service, especially in the 1840's, Henry Ruttan became noted as an inventor of appliances for heating and ventilating houses and railway coaches. In 1846 he obtained a patent for a Hot Air Generator, which was a cast iron furnace "for heating houses and other buildings with hot air". Would it be unkind to add that his nine years in the Legislative Assembly had qualified him as an expert on the subject of hot air?

George Glazebrook, the specialist in Ontario history, said about the Hot Air Generator that "unhappily for the inhabitants (of Upper Canada)...there is no evidence that central heating was adopted as a result." Two years later Ruttan produced the Canadian Ventilator, to fill a building with pure air, to warm the air, to eject cold and contaminated air, to ventilate the building above and below the ventilator. Furthermore, the inventor said, the device could be used as a cookstove.

Matt Austin considers him to be the "father of air conditioning", and I am inclined to agree with him. Certainly, of all Henry Ruttan's contributions to the life of Upper Canada, those that had to do with his self-taught engineering skills deserve to be remembered first.

#### The First Chief Magistrate - March 24, 1987

Election day for the members of the first Cobourg Board of Police---in effect, the first town council---was June 5, 1837, and the Cobourg Star reported that outstanding event in its issue of June 7. The news story totalled about 40 words, including the names of the successful candidates. The entire report was as follows:

"The Election for the members of the Corporation, under the present law incorporating this town, took place on Monday last, pursuant to notice when the following gentlemen were elected, viz:- E. Perry, Esq., George Ham, Andrew Jeffrey, W.S. Conger, William Weller."

You will note that E. Perry was the only one to have "Esquire" added to his name, which would suggest that the newspaper editor had decided that Mr. Perry was the only one of five members of the Board "to be regarded as a gentleman by birth, position or education", as the Concise Oxford defines "Esquire" when appended to a man's name.

The omission of Esquire from their names does not seem to have bothered Mr. Perry's fellow members of the new Board. When all five of them met for the first time after the election, they chose Ebenezer Perry to be President of the first Cobourg Board of Police. He was not called mayor---that title did not appear on the municipal political scene for another 13 years---but he might very well be regarded as Cobourg's first chief magistrate.

Little is known about Ebenezer Perry's early life, where or when he was born. He came to Cobourg from Ernestown, in the Kingston area, in 1815, after he had served in the militia in the War of 1812. Perry was a miller by trade and quickly established himself in business. Through the years until his election to the Board of Police, he acquired extensive land holdings (as did so many of his contemporaries), a mill, a pork packing plant, and a general store.

Perry was one of several business men who invested in a joint stock company which built the steamship "Cobourg" in 1833-34. In 1835 he was elected a director of the Cobourg Railway Company, which was to build a line to Rice Lake. Unfortunately economic conditions were not right and the company collapsed before a foot of track was laid. It was not until well into the 1850's that the railway to Rice Lake was built.

Ebenezer Perry, presumably a Methodist, was the treasurer of the building fund for Upper Canada Academy, later to be Victoria College. He was married five times, the fourth time to the sister of his second wife. He is probably best known for the handsome house he built in the 1850's at 420 Division Street. It's called "Woodlawn", owned by a restaurateur, and still in use.

Recognition of his contributions to the Cobourg community came after Confederation with the appointment of Ebenezer Perry to the new Senate of Canada.

#### The Bicentennial to Come - April 28, 1987

This will be the final talk in the series of historical vignettes I have called Prologue to a Celebration and for this occasion I want to look back at events that happened long before 1837. I want to go back 190 years, or thereabouts, when newcomers built their first log cabins on the north shore of Lake Ontario, on marshy land where three creeks emptied into the lake, just half a dozen miles east of where Peter Smith had established a flourishing fur trade with the Indians on the Ganaraska River.

No one can be sure of the exact date when the first settlers built their homes here, although there is no doubt they came in the last couple of years of the 18th century. Certainly if it had not been for them, there might have been no Cobourg, no village, and no town to celebrate in 1987.

Most historians give credit for the first settlement in the area that became Cobourg to Eliud Nickerson. He is known to have had a

log dwelling near the present intersection of King and Division Streets.

But not all historians agree that Nickerson was the first. At least one historian holds the view that Nathaniel and Bethany Herriman were camped at the mouth of Factory (or Cobourg) Creek in June 1797. It is a fact that the Herrimans were land owners by 1806. And there is no doubt that there was the beginning of a community as the 19th century dawned.

The handful of hardy souls who built their homes on this swampy location were much too occupied to bother about a name for their community. They knew they were in Hamilton Township in the District of Newcastle and that was sufficient. However, as more people moved into the area, it was clear that an urban community was being developed, more by chance than by design. Business people in particular found the lack of a name for the place to be troublesome.

Elijah Buck, an enterprising business man, did not object when people called the new settlement Buckville. The name did not last and was replaced by Hamilton, and then Port Hamilton. The name Hardscrabble was used, which suggests that life was not easy in the future Cobourg.

How did the name Cobourg come about? There is a difference of opinion as to whom credit for the name should go. One version was published in the Centennial issue of the Cobourg Sentinel-Star in 1937 in an historical review by Edith Kerr Macdonald, who wrote:

"Soon after the conclusion of the Napoleonic War, many retired military and naval officers from the Old Country settled in Cobourg.... In 1818 a meeting was held of these officers, who considered the name Hardscrabble much too unsuitable.... Captain the Hon. Walter Boswell was given the honour of re-naming the village. At that time the Times of London was full of the approaching marriage of one of the Royal Princesses to the Duke of Saxe-Coburg, so naturally in honour of the royal marriage, Captain Boswell named the hamlet Cobourg."

Mrs. Macdonald did not explain how the second "o" got into the name. Edwin Guillet wrote that "the extra 'o' crept in, presumably through ignorance of the correct spelling." He noted that Boswell had been given credit for selecting the name. Guillet wrote in his history of Cobourg: "There is much better evidence that the Rev. William Macaulay, first Church of England clergyman, called it Cobourg when he was sent to Hamilton Township late in 1819....it is known that when he left Cobourg in 1827 for Hallowell, he changed its name to Picton, and when he died in 1874 his obituary notice referred to these changes of name by him as facts."

Whether or not it was Walter Boswell, whether or not William Macaulay was responsible for the name, whether we spell it with or without a second "o", we are happy, this year, to commemorate its 150th year as a municipal corporation. Toward the end of this year, we can look forward to holding a Bicentennial celebration in 1998. Or maybe it will be in 1997, or perhaps in 1999!