

The Heritage Gazette of the Trent Valley

Volume 16, number 2, August 2011

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Cover picture: Keith Dinsdale (1930-2011)



TRENT VALLEY ARCHIVES

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PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Come on out to our fall open house and donor/ volunteer recognition barbecue, this September 17, from 4 – 7pm. This is an opportunity to see the new annex, and see highlights from some of our recent acquisitions. as well as some of the fascinating new acquisitions we have made in recent months. There will be food, live music and door prizes. Everyone is welcome: Members of the public are encouraged to attend to find out more about the archives and the services we offer – so bring a friend!
R.S.V.P. 705-745-4404 or admin@trentvalleyarchives.com.

These have been exciting times. Soon after the AGM we had a committee pulling together the quotes and details for tenders so that we can make the archives and our new annex meet archival standards for storage and access. We were mindful of the need to meet new provincial legislation that expects places such as ours to be accessible to those with mobility issues. This means ramping the main entrances at both the research centre and the annex, and improving toilet facilities. We have given high priority to climate control everywhere. As well, we need more shelving and archival boxes. These costs are not easily met and even if we get a Trillium grant, there will be significant costs having to be met by our members and friends. Please help in any way that you can.

We have received some library books and archival collections in the past few months as well. Some of our volunteers are working on the Olive Doran fonds, probably our most impressive genealogical collection so far. We have other large collections and believe they can greatly assist researchers. There are literally hundreds of family names caught in our family trees. We received some papers of the late Paul Rexe, a valuable political collection. We have received the Ian McRae scrapbook for the 1940s and 1950s which documents elements of the Canadian General Electric, of which he was works manager. Diane's index of the Peterborough Examiner has now reached 1890 and it has been well-received by researchers. Special thanks to all those who make it possible to keep up with our collections. There are many steps before they are considered ready for viewing.

Several events are lined up for the coming months. Check out the advertising and see if some of these would appeal to family and friends. Fundraising events and generous donations are essential to our frugal and well-run operation.

I hope to see you at the volunteer appreciation.

Thanks,

Pauline Harder

Keith Dinsdale: a life lived

Keith Dinsdale
December 1930 – 30 May 2011

Captain, Peterborough Fire Dept. (Ret.) Avid supporter & volunteer at Trent Valley Archives. Long-time player & coach of Seniors Slow Pitch and Old Timer Hockey in Peterborough and Arizona. - Passed away peacefully at home, in Peterborough, in his 81st year. Keith was the beloved husband of the late Margaret Dinsdale and the late Carol "Jean" Blakely. Dear father of Steve (Lesley), Bob (Wendy), Dave (Cheryl), Karen Kaufman (John) and Paul (Rhonda). Loving grandfather of Andrew, Katharine, Olivia, Jeremy, Vida, Elsa and Kyle. Great-grandfather of Aiden and Dorian. He will also be remembered by many other relatives and friends in Canada & Arizona. Visiting will be held at the COMSTOCK FUNERAL HOME & CREMATION CENTRE, 356 Rubidge Street, Peterborough, on Wednesday, June 8, 2011 from 9:00 am to 11:00 am. A celebration of Keith's life will follow, in the Chapel at 11:00 am. Interment at Keene Upper Cemetery to follow. Donations in Keith's memory, to the Canadian Cancer Society would be appreciated. Online condolences may be made at www.comstockfuneralhome.com.

Obituary notice

There is an excellent photo gallery together with some condolences on the Comstock Funeral Home webpage. http://obits.dignitymemorial.com/dignity-memorial/obituary.aspx?n=Keith-Dinsdale&lc=3768&pid=151472311&mid=4696311&locale=en_CA

Donations may also be made in his memory to the Trent Valley Archives, 567 Carnegie Avenue, Peterborough ON K9L 1N1 and online at www.trentvalleyarchives.com



Keith with Martha Ann Kidd, another original member of the Trent Valley Archives at a community award ceremony.

One of the key founders of Trent Valley Archives, Keith Dinsdale (1930-2011) has passed away. His death was unexpected and he had been active at TVA as recently as last Friday and Saturday. He was in great spirits, partly because we had secured a major genealogical collection, created by the late Olive Doran that Keith had examined some 16 years ago. He has been helping researchers writing the history of the village of Allandale / Lang. Around 1900, the Dinsdale family was one of the largest families in the village, now best known as the gateway to Lang Pioneer Village. He loved the picture of the village showing the clotheslines filled with laundry; this picture, he said with confidence, was taken on a Monday. Keith was an inveterate genealogist, who still told of his research trip to west Yorkshire. He was a superb genealogical researcher who turned his attention to all the families connected with

his family or with that of his wives, Margaret and Jean. He had a particular enthusiasm for the career and family of William

Nassau Kennedy, who became Mayor of Winnipeg, but was mainly known for his military career that took him to the Northwest for the first Riel Rebellion, and to Khartoum in the Sudan in 1885.

His two proudest accomplishments in the archival, genealogical and historic research worlds were APOLROD and the Trent Valley Archives. He was one of the key leaders, beginning around 1993, in the former organization which successfully saved the county land records which the Archives of Ontario planned to destroy. The solution was to transfer the land records to local repositories that would ensure the records for their area would be saved and would be accessible to local researchers. Under this program, Trent Valley Archives was named the repository of the land records for Peterborough County.

Keith Dinsdale was the main force behind the Trent Valley Archives and recruited my support in the fall of 1988. The organization was incorporated in November 1989, and received charitable status in 1990. In the beginning, its objective was to develop a regional archives facility or co-operation between archives that existed or would be created in the five counties from Haliburton to Cobourg and Port Hope. The TVA accepted its first donation, from the late Howard Pammett, one of most important Peterborough local historians, best known for his path-breaking work on the Peter Robinson settlers, a newspaper series on Peterborough history and his fine local history of Emily Township. We secured a space in Saint



Peterborough Fire Hall, as seen in 1908, was still the fire hall when Keith began his firefighting career.

Keith grew up in Peterborough of the 1930s and 1940s, and just this past week was discussing what he knew about the local gambling scene, much of it learned while he worked in a pool hall. He worked for several years in the electric service industry before becoming a Peterborough firefighter. He was very proud of his career and he was very active in labour union activities and conventions, and proactive about making improvements for the safety of firefighters. His persistent prodding and his own collecting of information led the Peterborough Fire Department to work with me and a committee of very able people, including Don Willcock, several firefighters and a community volunteer. He was proud of the final product, *Fighting Fires in Peterborough* (2008).

Keith was very active with the Peterborough Historical Society, and served on its board of directors in the early 1990s. He also helped organize several historical house tours. Even in the last month he attended two presentations about local history. Pat Marchen's excellent presentation about the J. G. Weir diary made many points about the importance of finding and using archives in order to know more about our past. Last Thursday he was at the Irish Club presentation on the Peter Robinson settlers, ably researched and presented by Dr Peter McConkey. It was fascinating to see him still so alert and excited about historical topics. He had even been going over his notes about his own family history and we recalled the day that I found the marriage registration for his grandfather, Jeffrey Dinsdale, in the St John's parish archives. We also met with Stan McLean to discuss a suitable memorial to home children who had fought in the two world wars. Keith's interest in sports was phenomenal, and he actually played and coached hockey with the firefighters and after retirement remained active in playing slo-pitch, both here and in his Arizona winters.

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Keith Dinsdale receiving an Ontario Community Service Award from Jeff Leal, MPP.

Peter's Elementary School, and five years later, in 1998, we acquired the Fairview Heritage Centre which has since been the home of the Trent Valley Archives. TVA has gone from success to success and now is looking for ways to expand, but still working on ideas that were discussed with excitement in 1988. Keith has been continually one of the most active volunteers in TVA.

Over the years, Keith and I shared our interest in archives and history, and I will miss his good smile and continual optimism and support for the ideas we pursued. He was one of the angels who ensured that the Trent Valley Archives was fiscally sound, and he will not be forgotten. He will be sorely missed for his enthusiasms were tempered with practicality and a willingness to be on the firing line.

We extend our condolences to the family. Over the years I met Karen, David, Steve, Paul and Bob; David was a valued volunteer at the Trent Valley Archives. Keith outlived his two wives. Margaret had a fascination for Irish genealogy, and Keith made a financial gift to an Irish Heritage presence at the Trent Valley Archives. His second wife, Jean, spread sunshine wherever she went. Keith missed them both greatly.

Donations may be made in Keith's memory to the Trent Valley Archives. When we can we will share details about a memorial service to celebrate Keith's life.



The late Michael Townsend, left, with Keith Dinsdale, were strong supporters of local heritage organizations, and both were very active in the Peterborough Historical Society as well as the Trent Valley Archives.

REFLECTIONS ON KEITH DINSDALE

One of the key founders of Trent Valley Archives, Keith Dinsdale (1930-2011) has passed away. His death was unexpected and he had been active at TVA as recently as last Friday and Saturday. He was in great spirits, partly because we had secured a major genealogical collection, created by the late Olive Doran that Keith had examined some 16 years ago. He has been helping researchers writing the history of the village of Allandale / Lang. Around 1900, the Dinsdale family was one of the largest families in the village, now best known as the gateway to Lang Pioneer Village.

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Keith Dinsdale was the main force behind the Trent Valley Archives from the earliest days, late 1988. In 1998, we acquired the Fairview Heritage Centre which has since been the home of the Trent Valley Archives. TVA has gone from success to success and now is looking for ways to expand, but still working on ideas that were discussed with excitement in 1988. Keith has been continually one of the most active volunteers in TVA.

Keith grew up in Peterborough of the 1930s and 1940s. By serendipity I chanced on a story about Keith in April 1947, when he was 16. He and his friend, Ed Hillier, rescued a youngster from the waters of Jackson Creek as it rushed under the viaduct near Wolfe and George. Ed plunged into the water and swam to catch the youngster. Keith hunted for a long pole shaped like a sling shot and at a key moment managed to use it to catch the clothing of the youngster. Manse Wilson applied artificial respiration while Keith went to the CPR station to call the police and fire stations. The Examiner reported, "Dinsdale, who took part in the rescue without getting wet, said that he was glad that he had been able to help his friend."

Keith laughed when I asked him about the hero who did not get wet. That he said was the only way to do it. Get things done without getting wet. Probably, good words to live by. In retrospect, I wondered if this rescue story was the inspiration for him wanting to be a firefighter.

He was a good firefighter. One of his favourite stories was talking about the time he ascended the new Fire Department aerial ladder to fix the clock on the Market Hall clock. (See the picture to the left, which was from Keith's private collection. However, I could only scan the top part of the iconic picture.) Keith was very confident working at heights, and his love of walking the roof at Trent Valley Archives was the subject of much wonder.

One of his earliest careers was as an electrician's helper installing services in new subdivisions in Toronto. In those days, one was grateful to have a job, period. But there is no doubt that life was easier once he became a firefighter, in a good union and tied to municipal payrolls. Almost from the beginning Keith was active in the union and he helped organize a couple of conventions that came to town. As well, he went to other conventions and had a reputation for loving and understanding rules of orders and constitutions. He never lost that love.

When Keith and I went to AAO [Archival Association of Ontario] conventions and to a genealogy conference in Ottawa, discussion often turned to the different ways in which organizations could handle their affairs. Quite rightly, we saw the AAO as suffering from a structure that was occupied with

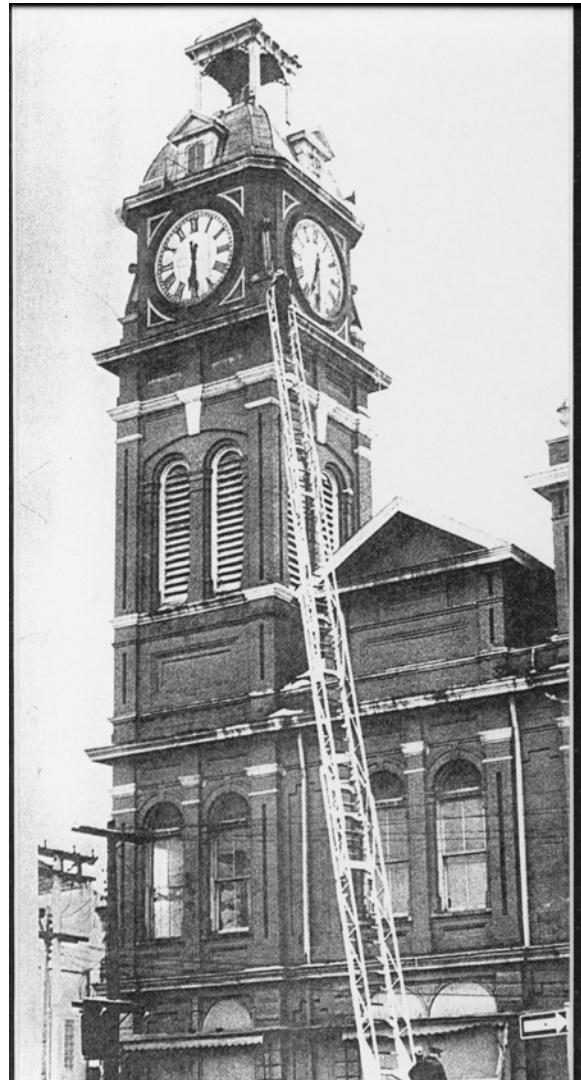
people who were not very politically astute. The organization was ineffective because too few archivists were interested in issues of governance. However, we realized as well that the cards were stacked against archives in Ontario. The museums were more effective in corraling grant programs. Municipal governments were bedeviled by municipal clerks who hung on to the power to make decisions about archives but knew nothing about records management or archives and believed that the job of an archivist was best described as clerical rather than professional.



The Zack's fire was both Peterborough's toughest fire for lives lost by firefighters, and was the one Keith remembered as the most important in which he fought. The implications of the fire were far-reaching, and helped form some of Keith's ideas about sanctity of life and the community supports for firefighters.

When Keith and I and about two dozen archival advocates tried to press the importance of archives during the early 1990s we met different political problems. Local archivists felt insulted when we suggested that this area was a black hole with respect to archives. The county of Simcoe was the earliest model for what was possible in county archives. Starting modestly in 1967 with 2,000 square feet, it has grown by doubling its space every ten years or so. It remains the most successful county archives in Ontario, mainly because it was well-managed and the county government saw great utility in what it was doing.

The AAO produced an excellent video on the idea that archives actually saved money when allowed to operate independently and with professional archivists. Using models from Windsor, Kingston and elsewhere this was well-demonstrated. Because of the municipal archivist, Windsor discovered that it had partial ownership in the tunnel to



Detroit; this was something that had been long forgotten, but proved a great bargaining chip. Others pointed out that archives and record centres operated in less expensive space, and used cardboard rather than metal filing cabinets. As a result, local government offices could expand without buying new office equipment or building expensive additions to the township offices. We had hoped that the excellent example of the Township of North Kawartha, which uses the archival services of the Trent Valley Archives, would lead to more attention to good archival practices. Instead, there has been a

deterioration. Some archival documents have succumbed to poor storage in damp basements, and to the difficulties of reorganization which rendered some archival documents less important than others, often depending on the whims of the clerk. The county declared the museum archives at Lang to be the county archives in what everyone knew was a joke. The county has been investigating an archives policy for over ten years during which time no archives have been saved and in which virtually no meetings have been held.

Our founding members even promoted the idea that archives could work together without sacrificing their respective mandates. This could be done by having one facility, meeting international archival standards. Then researchers would have access to all these archives from one information desk and in a consolidated research room. This was spurned as a “shopping mall” approach to archives; Keith and I thought that was an excellent description, but the Peterborough Museum and Trent University Archives felt their jobs would become redundant. Over the years the single most requested improvement to local archives has been that we should all be in a single good facility that was easy to find. Some have even suggested that they would head up fundraising campaigns if we would endorse this strategy. However, we knew that there was no political path that could lead to success. However, heritage institutions insist that archival policies should only be initiated by them.

Right: Keith grew up in a Peterborough with a vibrant downtown, and with railways and factories close at hand. (TVA Painting by Jack Hamer.).

Keith and I observed with wonder the speed at which the various local archives of the Greater Toronto Area responded to the political decision that united them all in what is now the City of Toronto Archives. This splendid facility was in the shadow of Casa Loma, readily accessible to public transit. But the facility was considered too distant from the various boroughs until they were legislated as one.

Alas we saw that even legislation does not achieve desired results as long as archivists are considered inferior to municipal clerks. The City of Kawartha Lakes was established with an archives built into its constitution. It was effectively mothballed by the city clerk; since then she has lost her job, but it was never about archives policy.

Even though archives have been around since the French Revolution, our area remains a black hole.

The Trent Valley Archives changed strategies. We decided we had to show what was possible by actually running an archives. We have been astounded by our growth. We could never have imagined going from three fonds to over 325, and from a few hundred feet of archives to now about 500 feet of archives, representing over half a million documents. We have above 20,000 photographs, over 200 reels of film, over 2,500 library books catalogued (and hundreds more), dozens of family histories, and an impressive array of genealogical materials. Our newspaper collection is remarkable for Havelock, Peterborough and Lakefield.

The Trent Valley Archives remains one-of-a-kind. We are



essentially an archives in which the archives is the governing authority. This has meant we have depended on the support of our members (both in membership fees and donations). Although we have one paid employee, we have remained an organization run by volunteers. We have a high community profile because we have advertised the value of archives by

writing newspaper columns and running an extensive program of walks and special events that are fueled by the research base of our own archives.

We have been an unqualified success, far more impressive than Keith and I ever imagined twenty years ago. However, we never advanced an inch closer either to regional or county archives. The idea had the support of the Symons Commission on Canadian Studies, of the Archives of Ontario, and in some ways is key to the decentralization policies that have been unfolding at the Library and Archives of Canada. We need some imaginative political thinking, a regional or county facility that strives to serve all people, and a governance strategy that recognizes that archives are essentially economical and the key to insuring that our region will have significant resources for producing histories of all aspects of our society. And we need a broad vision that is promoted and developed by a wide range of people who are quite independent, innovative and committed to making archives accessible. Not unlike what Keith envisioned in 1988.

Over the years, Keith and I shared our interest in archives and history, and I will miss his good smile and continual optimism and support for the ideas we pursued. He was one of the angels who ensured that the Trent Valley Archives was fiscally sound, and he will not be forgotten. He will be sorely missed for his enthusiasms were tempered with practicality and a willingness to be near the firing line. Go through life without getting wet, after all. All of us at the Trent Valley Archives are thankful for Keith and his many contributions.

BOY HEROES PULL YOUNGSTER FROM JACKSON CREEK; MAN REVIVES HIM ON BANK SWEEPED THROUGH CPR VIADUCT AFTER FALL FROM BRIDGE, YOUNGSTER SURVIVES AS TRIO OF BYSTANDERS WORK AS TEAM

*Peterborough Examiner, 21 April 1947
Special thanks to Don Courneyea*

The young Kenneth Johnston and his father meet the boy heroes.

Six-year-old Kenneth Johnston survived the icy waters of Jackson Creek Sunday afternoon because two boys and a man knew what to do in an emergency. The boys, Edward Hillier, 15, of 251 Simcoe St, and Keith Dinsdale, 16, of 289½ George St, hauled the lad out, and Manse Wilson of 166 Adeline St saved his life by applying artificial respiration to his unconscious body.

Hillier, who wears his hero's mantle with becoming modesty, was the main figure in this drama of life and death in the swift-flowing, spring-swollen Jackson Creek near the CPR station.

Saw Boy Fall

While riding their bicycles along Wolfe St shortly after 2.30 p.m. just where Jackson's Creek runs under the viaduct on the north side of the platform, they heard a splash, and rushing over, noticed a young boy, who had

been climbing along the beams which cross the creek at this point, had fallen into the fast-flowing stream.

From this point the stream races through a concrete-covered viaduct and emerges 100 yards downstream. Realizing the hopelessness of effecting a rescue in the darkness of the viaduct, to the danger of their own lives, the boys dashed around the CPR station and spotted the bobbing body of the lad about 15 yards from where it had emerged from the viaduct.

With no thought for his personal safety young Hillier, a



member of the Sea Cadets, whipped off his jacket, kicked off his shoes and plunged into the icy water which at this point is about 15 feet deep and running fast.

"It must have been very deep," Hillier told the Examiner, "for I never touched bottom at all. Seeing the boy come up a little way in front of me, I swam over to him but had a job to reach him at first for the fast current was taking him away from me. However, I managed to grab an arm but lost my hold and the little chap went under again. When he came up again I caught him by the shirt and managed to kick out and drag him nearer the shore." By the time the struggling boy was 300 yards from where the Johnston lad had fallen in.

Helped with Pole

In the meantime Dinsdale had managed to find a pole about 15 feet long with a forked end and was trying to reach the drowning lad as the current carried both nearer.

"I was getting very tired," said Hillier, "and unfortunately lost my hold of the lad and he went down again. On coming up Dinsdale managed to stab him with the end of the long pole and luckily it caught part of his shirt."

At this moment, Mr and Mrs Wilson were driving by in their car along Townsend St and Mrs Wilson drew her husband's attention to what she thought was a blue package in the water. "On looking a second time," said Mrs Wilson, "I realized, to my horror, that it was a boy in the water and I pointed him out to my husband, who immediately pulled up, and ran over to the creek bank. It turned out to be young Hillier

who was making a valiant effort to keep the boy, who was caught on the end of the pole, afloat."

Suffering From Cold

"By the time that I reached the bank," Mr Wilson said, Dinsdale and Hillier had managed to secure a more firm hold on the little chap. Hillier, who was suffering from the cold water, scrambled to the side and I walked into the water and between us we dragged the lad to the bank. I immediately commenced artificial respiration on him, at the same time sending Dinsdale to the CPR station to phone for the police and the fire department.

"I worked for several minutes on the boy, who was unconscious when we pulled him out. The fire brigade arrived with full equipment for artificial respiration but just then the wee chap showed signs of life. I got a lot of water out of him and after a short while the officer in charge of the fire department, Stu Foster, said it would be safe to see about getting him home. The first words the lad said were "Mum, Mum, Mum."

Wrapped in Blankets

"We found that he was Kenneth Johnston, son of Mr and Mrs Percy Johnston of 44 Lafayette St. Foster wrapped him in some blankets and took him to his home."

Hillier went over to the CPR station to try and dry out some of his clothes until some dry clothing was brought to him from his parent's house. "One bad part of the affair is that I lost a pocket wallet from my hip pocket," said Hillier.

By Sunday evening Hillier appeared quite calm about the whole matter and said that he felt he had done just what any one would be expected to do under such circumstances. Dinsdale, who took part in this rescue without getting wet, said that he was glad that he had been able to help his friend.

"Saved His Life"

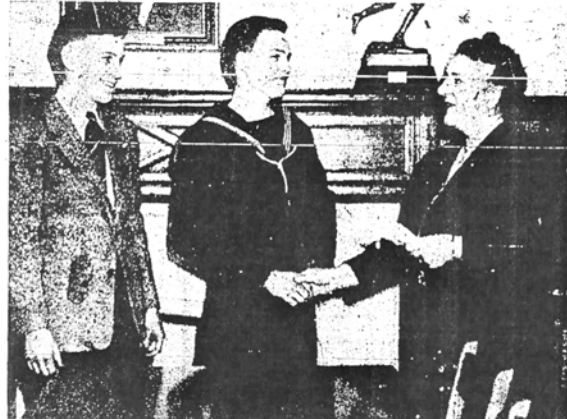
Dr Bob Young, who attended the boy and ordered him to remain in bed for three days, had nothing but praise for the swift action of the boys and Mr Wilson. "Without the immediate action of Mr Wilson in applying artificial respiration," he told the Examiner, "the boy would undoubtedly have died. He had considerable water in him and was thoroughly chilled."

Wilson, an employee of the CGE and a member of the Canadian Army provost corps during the war, learned first aid while in the army. "We had a stiff course in all kinds of first aid when I was in the army," he said, "but this is the first time I've been able to use my knowledge."

At the Johnston home Sunday evening Kenneth was propped up in bed in warm blankets, wreathed in smiles and surrounded by his three rescuers. He did not recognize any of his visitors and said he could remember nothing from the time he fell in the water until he was being wrapped up in blankets by the fire department. "I shan't play near that creek again," he said.

Mrs Johnston, overcome at the news that her child, seven blocks from home, had fallen into the creek and been rescued, was almost speechless. She could only murmur her

thanks to the three who had effected the rescue. Her husband is a taxi driver.



Keith Dinsdale and Edward Hillier meet Mrs W. Addyman from the Local Council of Women. (Examiner)

Local Council Recognizes Bravery of Boy Rescuers

Peterborough Examiner, 23 April 1947

"As it function in all civic activities for the welfare of the community, the Local Council of Women is a major force in matters of either charity, civic enterprise, or in any manner that will be of benefit to the city." So said Mrs W. Addyman, Local Council president, in presenting a cheque to Edward Hillier and Keith Dinsdale for bravery in saving the life of a young Peterborough boy, Kenneth Johnston, last Sunday.

She was speaking at a public meeting in the PCVS auditorium at which Major T. K. Ketcheson of London gave an address on "Conservation."

"It appears," said Mrs Addyman, "that here in Peterborough there are provisions made whereby a person may be rewarded for saving the life of an animal but not for saving human life. This is one case where the Local Council of Women can and will function, and bring to the notice of the city that such acts of bravery should not go unrewarded."

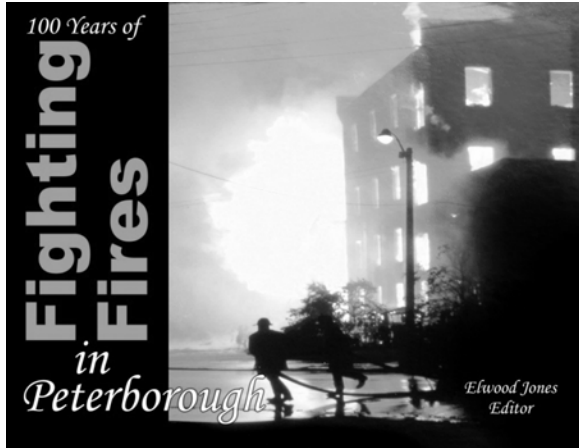
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Book on firefighting an important work

There is a marvelous new book in our community that should be in as many homes, local offices, schools as possible. *Fighting Fires in Peterborough* with its excellent colour cover is 191 pages of information about the Peterborough Fire Department.

The information comes in many forms: stories, photographs, lists, and drawings. There are stories of people saving lives, dying, surviving, helping, and as the title states

fighting fires. There are stories from memories, newspapers, and archives. Humorous and sad stories, many of them very interesting stories.



Elwood Jones is the author of the book that helps celebrate 100 years of the Peterborough professional firefighters (this year). Elwood had plenty of help from people such as committee members Maureen Crowley who was the chair, Robert Crawte, Keith Dinsdale, Pam Kelly, John Koning, Robert Webb, Don Willcock and Jim Higginson.



The Sugar Bowl Restaurant fire was one that Keith remembered.

Books like this take plenty of work; research, material collection, interviewing, patience and time, but they are so worth it. What Elwood and the committee have done is left Peterborough with a lasting history inside a package that will be with the community forever.

There are stories of the department being formed and with Elwood, the historian, the history behind the stories. There are many fascinating stories, some never told, others forgotten but worth telling again

The book is \$40 at the downtown fire hall, Trent Valley Archives, the museum and Chapters.

Only 1,000 copies exist so (I hate to mention it) start thinking Christmas present. It's a wonderful hard cover book that looks great. Someone once said you can't judge a book by looking at its cover. This one you can.

Thank you Elwood Jones and everyone in the group for living in the community and caring enough to make us all more aware of what's happened in its past.

Recipients of 2009 heritage awards announced

The Peterborough Historical Society Heritage Awards will honour a number of local people who have made significant contributions to the community, a news release states. The awards ceremony will take place April 29 from 7:30 p. m. to 9 p. m. at Empress Gardens at 131 Charlotte Street.

The 2009 winners:

* Don Barrie is the winner of the F. H. Dobbin Award for his production of the book "Lacrosse: The Peterborough Way." The F. H. Dobbin Award acknowledges exceptional coverage of historical events, articles, photos or videos.

* Keith Dinsdale is the winner of the Charlotte Nicholls Award for his assistance in the acquisition of Fairview Heritage Centre for the use of Trent Valley Archives. The Charlotte Nicholls Award is awarded to individuals or groups who make substantial financial donations for the preservation and/or recognition of historic sites and artifacts.

* Lois Watson wins the Samuel Armour Award for her work on the Samuel Lowry Weaver's Shop at Lang Pioneer Village. The Samuel Armour Award recognizes the involvement of students in local historical opportunities, programs and/or development of curriculum based on local history.

* Bruce Fitzpatrick and June James are the co-winners of the J. Hampden Burnham Award, which is given to individuals, groups or organizations who establish a venue for public awareness of historical events, places or people. Fitzpatrick is being honoured for his Scandals and Scoundrels tours and James for her transcription for the Internet of the Canadian Census of 1901 and 1910.

* Gwen McMullen and Shirley Twist are being honoured with the George Cox Award for their work on the Christ Church Museum in Lakefield. The George Cox Award is awarded for historical restoration and/or preservation of properties.

Editor's note: The two preceding articles appeared in the Peterborough Examiner in 2008 and 2009.

The following condolences posted to the funeral home site were particularly touching.

The Blakely family are all sad to see Keith depart. We recently had a chance to take him out for lunch when we all were in Peterborough—it was the first time that he got to meet our youngest William.(4)

Keith was a "man's man" and sort of a throw-back to a

different age for all of us. Keith was like a walking/talking history book for all of the grandchildren from Toronto who didn't know much about Peterborough and the area. He was equally versed in sports, civic politics, historical anecdotes and genealogy. He had a firm handshake, he looked you in the eye and said exactly what was on his mind. He said what he meant and meant what he said. We all marvelled at his 'never retire' approach to baseball & hockey....But--most of all and most importantly he was good to my Mom, Jean. He respected her and he worshipped her. It was difficult to see him so sad when she passed away. I will miss Keith as he was one of my last remaining links to my hometown. Our condolences to all of the Dinsdale family.

David Blakely, *Toronto, Ontario*



Captain Keith Dinsdale (1930-2011) RIP

Our deepest condolences to the children and their families. Keith's caring and dedication to his projects was always admirable. Personally, our favourite memory was how Keith and Marg tutored us for first trip 'across the pond'. All done with Karen's help and much humour of course. God Bless you both Marg and Keith.

Sandy & Paul Fice, *Peterborough, Ontario*

Sincere sympathy to Keith's family. I have enjoyed many good conversations and good times with Keith and Jean. I learned a great deal from Keith while working collaboratively with him on some of the Archive and Peterborough Canadian Irish Club projects. Also, since I was born and raised in the village of Indian River, Keith and I had many good laughs and stories to relate from days gone by. He will be greatly missed.

Brenda (McGuinness) Leddy

A Letter from Elsa Dinsdale (read at memorial service)

Dear Gramps,

Today I walked through the narrow paths of Ka-uma Village, between the gleaming red mud brick homes covered with thatched roofs. Children peeped out and greeted me with bright smiles, "hellos and good mornings". The early morning sunlight shone over the grassy hills and I breathed in the air which was thick with the smell of burning wood. As I stood for a moment on my way to work, in the beautiful south east African country of Malawi, so many miles away from home, I felt you close to me. I truly wish I could be there today to celebrate your life and to sit with our family and share memories together, but my heart is with you now.

Many years ago near lovesick lake we sat together by the water and I called out to you in my excited four year old voice "Gramps!! Gramps!! Guess what?? I can count alllllll the way to 25!!" A kind smile crossed your face and you exclaimed "Hokey Dinah Elsa !! You are so grown up!!"

Although life can bring many challenges, hardships and obstacles, I believe that there is always more in life to be grateful for. Now, I would like to take the time to thank you for what you have given me.

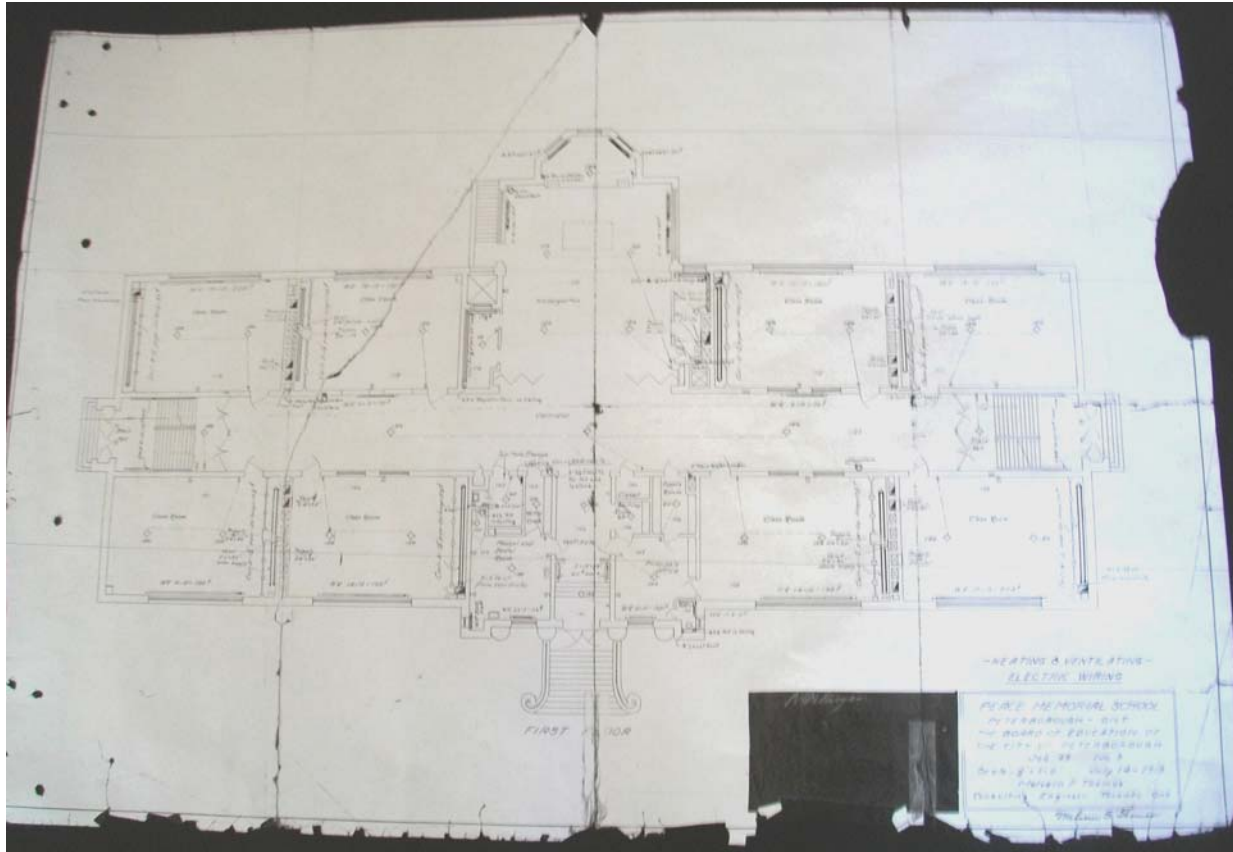
Thank you Gramps for teaching me how to be a Dinsdale. For those who have been born with this genetic condition, you may understand what I mean by this. For partners and significant others, you probably have a very good idea. A Dinsdale is someone who is kind and someone who is generous, a someone who gets a bit feisty at times and is probably stubborn as hell. Dinsdales will generally decline your help, partially because they sincerely don't want to inconvenience you and also because we are so stubborn that we like to think that we never need any help at all. Despite this, Dinsdales can also be incredibly brave, strong and resilient. I imagine that these qualities, your courage and dedication are what gave you the ability to be a great fire fighter. Zikomo, thank you gramps for giving me some of these Dinsdale qualities. This strength and stubbornness is now keeping my feet firmly planted on African soil and believing that it is possible to have a better world.

Thank you for giving me a beautiful family to share this life with. Thank you for giving me wonderful uncles, an aunt and cousins. Thank you for raising a remarkable son who has been an incredibly supportive, loving father... and a sister who is my best friend and wise teacher. And, now, in this moment, thank you for bringing us together and reminding us what life is truly about... **chickondi**, ...love.

PRINCE OF WALES SCHOOL AT 90

Guy Thompson

On Monday, 8 January 1973 I assumed the role of principal at what was then Peterborough's largest elementary school, Prince of Wales. The school was then just a little more than 50 years old. Now we are looking at the 90th anniversary of the first arrival of children at "the new school".



It was 9:00 AM on Tuesday September 6th, 1921 when the girls lined up at the south entrance and the boys lined up at the north entrance. The words "GIRLS" and "BOYS" were clearly engraved in the stone lintels above the doors but for at least 40 years now there have been no such gender divisions for getting into the building. "GIRLS" is no longer visible because of the 1965 addition. One of the little boys entering the north door that September 6th, 1921 was Isadore Black, who later became a well known Peterborough business man. In 1996 Mr. Black was chosen to assist with the "kick off" for the celebration of the school's 75th anniversary. This was done by real kicking of a real football which Mr. Black valiantly agreed to do. It was quite

entertaining for those of us in attendance as the gentleman's shoe came off and travelled a considerable distance further than the football.

Statement Accepts & Expenditure Prince of Wales School Year Ending 31 Dec 1920	
Accepts	Expenditure
Balance forward	\$ 5,930.10
Proceeds of sale of site 4.93 acres	10,246.00
Proceeds of sale of site	11,310.20
Proceeds of sale of site	2,251.97
Proceeds of sale of site	2,500.00
Proceeds of sale of site	1,197.30
Proceeds of sale of site	4,418.09
Proceeds of sale of site	11,179.50
Proceeds of sale of site	115,500.00
Proceeds of sale of site	18,400.00
Proceeds of sale of site	532.28
Balance	96,696.44
	\$ 245,465.91

Statement Re Prince of Wales School December 31 1920	
By City Sec. proceeds sale of site	By City Sec. proceeds sale of site
By City Sec. proceeds sale of site	11,310.20
By City Sec. proceeds sale of site	2,251.97
By City Sec. proceeds sale of site	2,500.00
By City Sec. proceeds sale of site	1,197.30
By City Sec. proceeds sale of site	4,418.09
By City Sec. proceeds sale of site	11,179.50
By City Sec. proceeds sale of site	115,500.00
By City Sec. proceeds sale of site	18,400.00
By City Sec. proceeds sale of site	532.28
By City Sec. proceeds sale of site	96,696.44
	\$ 245,465.91

Arnold Noftall, a long time educator who taught at Prince of Wales for several years (1935-1944) and Al Poolman, a well-known local artist were also among the earliest students to enter the new school.

This new school was designed in 1919 by well-known Peterborough architect W.R. L. Blackwell. The blueprints are dated July 14, 1919. The building was ahead of its time in its day with steel and masonry stairs, steel sash windows and modern electrical, ventilation and heating systems. A unique feature is the marble steps inside the front entrance. The most interesting item on the blueprints is the name "PEACE MEMORIAL SCHOOL". Other schools and buildings around the country, including the Peace Tower in Ottawa were given names like this in recognition of the peace that followed World War 1. There is a Peace Memorial School in Hamilton, for example. The Board of Education minutes indicate that this name was "adopted by the architect". A motion was made at the board meeting on March 2, 1920 to change the name to The Prince of Wales School. (see copy of motion). At that time the board had the two previous generations of the Royal Family in their schools. In the north end there was Queen Alexandra (now occupied by Activity Haven); in the south end was King Edward, for King Edward VII, (recently demolished for the new YMCA). The East Ward and West Ward schools had been named King George, for King George V, and Queen Mary (both built from the same blueprints in 1912). So Edward, the Prince of Wales, later to become King Edward VIII in 1936, had Peterborough schools named for his parents and grandparents. In 1919 Prince Edward was making news in Canada by buying his ranch in Alberta. So they honoured

the Prince and completed the Royal Family by naming this wonderful new, very modern building THE PRINCE OF WALES SCHOOL.

The total cost of the new school \$250,938. This included: Land costing \$10,846.00 (4.93 acres purchased from the

Minutes of the Board of Education

Mr. Patterson introduced the matter of the name of the new school now in course of erection, the present name "Peace Memorial School" had been adopted by the architect & if a change was contemplated it should be made at once so that a proper inscription could be placed on the stone. It was then moved by Mrs. Weaver, seconded by Mr. Patterson, and carried, that the new school be named "The Prince of Wales School" in honor of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales.

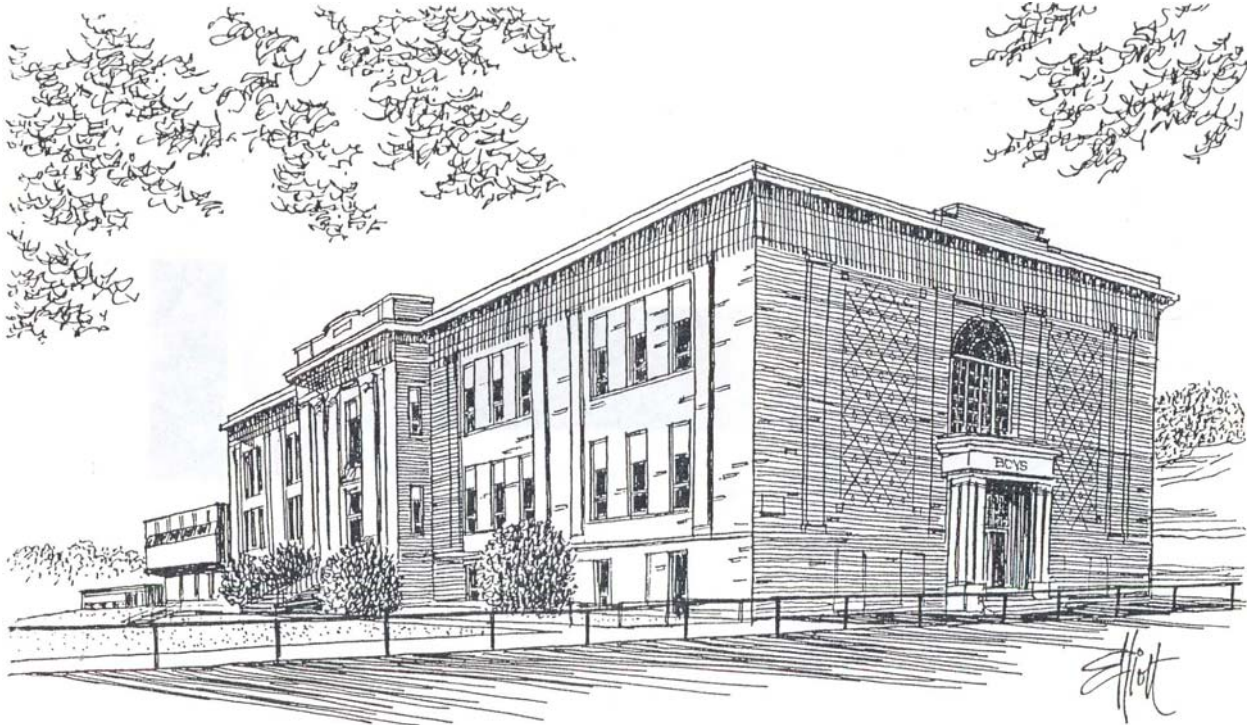
The Board then adjourned

Confirmed

Holland, D. J. Chairman

- Chamberlain estate
- Richard A. Sheehy & Sons
Contract \$160,799.00
- Miller, Powell & Watson (John H. Miller, Geo. R. Powell, G.H. Watson) Wiring \$2747.00
- George A. Brenton Plumbing \$13,000.00
- R.G. Sturgeon & Co. Heating, Ventilation \$32,145
- Grading, sodding, seeding & walks \$13,526.0
- W.R.L. Blackwell and M.F. Thomas
Architect & Consulting Engineer \$8,800.00
- Blackboards \$1733.44

A Grand Opening was held at the school on September 1st, 1921 using the kindergarten room which later became the library, with the large wooden folding doors pushed back to extend the space out into the corridor. The 605 children arrived on Tuesday September 6th.



In 1951 the original 18 room school was augmented by an "addition". It was actually a separate building known as "The Little School". It had a kindergarten room and five regular classrooms designed for primary children. There was also a fairly large meeting area just inside the main entrance which was referred to as "the rotunda" and a small instructional office area which included a bathroom equipped with a bathtub. As a principal I never quite figured out what we should do with that bath tub, although I heard from a reliable source about two children who due to unfortunate circumstances needed a bath. The two buildings were joined by the second addition in 1965. The main part of this structure was the gymnasium with an adjoining kitchen. The upper floor above the gym had four classrooms and a staffroom. In 1966-67 the total population of the school, including staff was 1000.

During the late 60's and early 70's there were about 5000 employees at the Canadian General Electric plant. Most of these workers went home at lunch time and all of the children went home for lunch too. So we had to adjust our bell times to get the children home and back safely. Thus we had the longest lunch hour in the school system 11:40 to 1:20.

*Report of Building Committee
To the Chairman & members of the Board of
Education
Gentlemen
Your Building Committee beg to report
and recommend that Mr. M. R. Blackwell,
Architect, be paid the sum of \$1000.⁰⁰ on
account services rendered in connection with
the Prince of Wales School.
Respectfully submitted
Sgd. E. G. Patterson
Chairman*

Prior to my arrival as principal in 1973 I attended a few meetings at Prince of Wales but my other memory is of "unit lessons" while I was at Teachers College in the fall of 1957. I taught one lesson in a Grade 8 class where Mr. Don McKnight was the teacher and Mr. R. J. Bolton was the principal. I was also assigned to do a Grade 1 lesson in "the Little School" (1951 addition) with Miss Marion Pound. Some of these activities were interrupted when all Peterborough schools were closed for a short time in the fall of 1957 due to concerns about "the Asian Flu". It's interesting to note that Don McKnight took over from me

as principal in September 1979 and also that Miss Pound was a primary teacher on my staff for six and a half years. In conversation with other staff members she referred to me as "Old Thompson".

Prince of Wales has had fourteen principals. I was the seventh. Their names in order for the ninety year history of the school are: Keith Wightman, G. S. Mattice, P. D. Windrim, R. J. Bolton, H. R. Wilson, Ivan Woolley, Guy Thompson, Don McKnight, Ron Brown, Don Murphy, Dick Cameron, Mina Murphy, Joe Tompkins and Penny Hope.

I am fortunate to know and be in contact with two people whose lives have been heavily intertwined with the history of Prince of Wales covering the years from 1954 to the present day.

Eric Sloan attended the school from 1954 to 1962 and then returned to teach there for 18 years (1968 to 1986). Later he was a parent of two daughters in the school's French Immersion program. Eric says, "My memories of Prince of Wales are numerous. I wore a number of hats during my years of association with 'Prince' ...I even wore the hat of President of the Home and School Association while teaching there".

Lynn Holland attended Prince of Wales from 1962 to 1971 and returned as a teacher in 1980. After 30 years she's still there (as of June 2011). Lynn remembers: the hill in the winter, Colonel Bolton, the skylights on the second floor, separate doors and separate yards for boys and girls and also classroom pets -- Ron Westman's alligator and Grant Johnston's boa constrictor. Lynn says, "Prince of Wales has a long and rich heritage of educating for the future. The building itself was designed with vision".

Illustrations: 1. Architectural drawing of the Peace Memorial School before it was named Prince of Wales School. (Prince of Wales School); 2. Isadore Black kicking the football; 3. Art drawing of Prince of Wales School by George Elliott; Excerpts from the school board minutes: 4. Resolution to change name; 5. Statement of expenditures for building Prince of Wales School; 6. resolution to pay the architect for his services .

Died a Hero Private Jim Barry of Hastings (1893 – 1916)

David and Sharon Barry

Jim Barry was the Great-Grandson of Patrick Barry and Ellen Connelly who immigrated with their family of five children to Upper Canada in 1837, after first residing a few years in northern Vermont - the family having originally departed the Bantry area of West Cork, Ireland in 1832. In about 1844, Jim's Great Grandparents, Patrick and Ellen relocated to the Hastings area, joining a small Irish Diaspora that had settled that area in the early 1830s. Jim's ancient family origins appear to have been descended from a very small pre-Christian Celtic tribe, native to West Cork by the tribal name **Baire** (meaning goal) and then **O'Baire**, the name much later evolving into the surname **O'Barry** and finally to **Barry**.

Private Jim Barry's Grandfather William¹ Barry, the son of Patrick and Ellen and his young wife Mary Holland purchased their farm in Percy Township, a few miles south-east of the village of Hastings, at the head of what today is known as Barry's Lake, in the year 1862. William's oldest son William David Barry married Catherine Condon of nearby Douro Township in 1884 and had four children, three sons and a daughter. Although William David spent the early part of his life in the lumbering business, residing at Nassau Mills, the site of a historic old sawmill and now the site of Trent University in Peterborough, they also lived in the Gravenhurst area. Then, in about 1900 they returned to Percy Township and took over the farm that his father had purchased near Hastings in 1862. Although their two older children were born in the Gravenhurst area and baptized at Saint

Peter's Church in Peterborough, their youngest son James was born on the family farm near Hastings in the year 1893. He was baptized at "Our Lady of Mount Carmel" church in Hastings - his godparents being Jacobus Barry (Thomas James Barry) who later went to Michigan and Anna Armstrong of Hastings. Jim received his primary school education at the Dutch Line School and as young adults both Jim and his older brother William Francis remained at home, helping their father William David on the farm. However, based on Council Minutes for the village of Hastings for that period, it appears that the ambitious and energetic young Jim Barry also supplemented his farm income, working as a "jobber" for the Village of Hastings, often performing odd jobs, such as street and sidewalk cleaning and repairs. As a young man, Jim also appears to have worked by-day for William John Barry, his father's First Cousin and my grandfather, sometimes residing with him and his young family for short periods at the original old Barry homestead a mile or so south of Hastings (*based on my Grandfather's "Daily Journal," for that period*).

The news that England had declared war against Germany on August 4, 1914, struck terror into the heart of every Canadian citizen, with the people of the little village of Hastings being no exception. The twelfth Parliament of Canada, under Prime Minister Sir Robert Borden, (1911-1920) along with the other [Dominions](#) of the [British Empire](#), were immediately called upon by the "Mother Land" to join the

struggle against the German Empire. As Germany attacked France through neutral Belgium, the Canadian Government enacted the "War Measures Act," thereafter forming the "Canadian Overseas Expeditionary Force." Prime Minister Borden had insisted upon an autonomous Canadian army, rather than to again see Canadian soldiers and regiments split up and assigned to British Army Divisions, as had happened a few years earlier, during the [Boer War](#). So, now for the first time in its [history](#), Canada was to fight a foreign war with distinct military units under [Canadian](#) commanders, although it was agreed that senior command would remain British.

After the initial shock, to the population of this still very young country of less than 50 years, staunchly loyalty to the British empire and with its foreign policy still very closely aligned with the motherland, the war came to be seen as a glorious and celebratory event, with the population remaining totally ambivalent of the tragedies and horrors that lie ahead. This sentiment, a carryover from the glamour and success that Canada had experienced serving alongside its motherland during the Boer War, brought throngs of young Canadian men, as well as young British Expatriates living in Canada and in some cases, even young American men to the recruiting stations. Within a short while train stations echoed with the clatter of leather soled boots and small arms as [thousands](#) of adventurous and patriotic young Canadian soldiers mobilized for overseas service.

One of the first if not the first Hastings men to sign up for service with the newly formed Canadian Expeditionary Force was a Mister Reginald Kingdum Runnels, a young Canadian lad who had served with the 57th Regiment of West Middlesex (England) during the Boer War. On November 28, 1914, within a few months of the outbreak of the war, Reg, the son of Mr. R. G Runnels of Hastings, reenlisted with the newly formed 4th Canadian Mounted Rifles Battalion and commenced his basic training at the unit's new home base, the Canadian National Exhibition grounds in Toronto. However, to the disappointment of many otherwise very patriotic and adventure seeking young Canadian men, stringent size and physical restrictions kept many of them out of the army at this time.

Within a year or so, as news of the high casualty rate in Belgium and France hit home, the glamour and glory of the war waned for many Canadians - this adversely effecting enlistment, creating serious shortfalls within all ranks of the army. In July of 1915, to revitalize recruitment, the required [height](#) restriction was reduced from 5 ft-3 inches to 5 ft-2 inches. Soon after, the minimum chest measurement was also dropped by half an inch, to 33 inches. As part of this revitalized recruitment drive, the War Department also launched advertising campaigns, posting colored posters at strategic locations in every little town and village across Canada. Recruiters from various military units travelled the countryside, encouraging young men from these small rural communities into the army, but in larger urban areas, permanently based recruiters worked from fixed recruiting centers such as the Peterborough Armouries - it eventually becoming the home to the 93rd Battalion. The [clergy](#) also became actively involved in the recruitment process; often preaching sermons structured around Christian duty and patriotism, to persuade their young men into the ranks. Father Bretherton the very charismatic and civil minded, but also much loved and respected pastor of "Our Lady of Mount Carmel," RC church in Hastings was no exception, regularly encouraging the young single men of his parish to come forward and defend; country, the motherland and the empire.

The original strategy of the German army had been to invade France by going the long way around, through neutral Belgium, before turning southwards to encircle the French army

on the German border. With the German advance through Belgium eventually stalled, mainly by the stiff resistance of the French army, both sides dug in; forming a long meandering line of fortified [trenches](#), stretching from the English Channel to the [Swiss](#)-France border. Now, with both sides effectively staring at each other from across their respective lines and unable to outflank each other, the Western Front was reduced almost entirely to "Trench Warfare." As with all the allies, the Canadian Corp in Belgium, now totaling some 50,000 troops, composed of the First and Second Army Divisions, soon found themselves tenuously holding their positions, which consisted of a six or seven mile long trench system immediately south of the Ypres Salient, between the Towns of Kemmel and Ploegsteert. Fortunately, relief was on its way, as a [Third](#) Army Division was in the planning and development stages - the result of reinvigorated recruitment drives back home.

With Canadian sentiment and public discourse again on the rise, a significant event in the life of a number of young Hastings men was unfolding in Canada's Capital city; Ottawa. The 8th Canadian Mounted Rifles, a former Militia Battalion that had fought in the Boer War and a sister unit to the 4th CMR that Reg Runnels had earlier reenlisted in, had just been reestablished in that city. On Tuesday, May 15th 1915, the "Ottawa Citizen" reported that amongst much fan fare and hoopla, the newly formed 8th Canadian Mounted Rifles, marched through the streets of that city in their full military regalia, accompanied by a number of marching bands en-route to Union Station, a short distance from the Federal [Parliament buildings](#), from where they were to be transported by troop trains to their new home at Camp Barriefield, near Kingston, Ontario. As soldiers of these mounted infantry battalions, now located across the entire country, these men were to be trained to ride to the battlefield on horseback and then dismount and fight as regular foot soldiers. In the distant Middle East the British Navy, acting on their age old premise, "*the one who rules the seas, rules the world,*" was simultaneously bombarding Turkey in an early attempt to force the Ottoman-Turks out of the war. However, they failed miserably and so the ever ambivalent and impatient Winston Churchill the British "Lord of the Admiralty" ordered a hastily assembled Middle Eastern Expeditionary Force, committing British and other Commonwealth troops to the region. Accordingly, the various Battalions of the Canadian Mounted Rifle units including the newly formed 8th CMR were proposed for service in the Middle East.

Within a few days of this historic Ottawa event, a well know and very respected Hastings resident, by the name of Frederick Stanley Hubbs, a veteran of a Canadian Calvary unit in the Boer War, at age-37, also reenlisted in the army and was assigned the rank of [Lieutenant](#), in the recently re-activated 8th Canadian Mounted Rifle unit, now based in nearby Kingston. Fred, had previously relocated to the village from the Picton area, following the Boer War, where he was employed as a "Printer Publisher" with the old Hastings Star, then owned and operated by a Mister Pat Howard.

This courageous example shown by the relative newcomer to the area, Fred Hubbs, coupled with the reduced physical requirements for enlistment in the Army, and the resurgence in local support for the war, appears to have influenced a number of other young Hastings men, spurring them to action. Within a few months of Fred's enlistment, [six](#) young Hastings men, [three](#) of them fellow parishioners at "Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish," including Jim Barry, who no doubt, was further influenced by his beloved pastor, Father Bretherton, came forward and enlisted in the recently reactivated 8th Canadian

Mounted Rifles, who had just been committed to fight in the far of Middle East. No doubt, the excitement, glamour and glory of joining this highly touted unit, to join the fight in these distant, but yet very historic lands, such as Jordan, Palestine, Mesopotamia and Syria would have appeared irresistible to these lads – many of these locations probably only vaguely familiar to them, through their earlier Bible or Sunday School studies. With their individual riding and equine skills, learned from a very youthful age, these young Hastings men would have seen this unit as a perfect fit. One may well imagine, they dreamed and yearned of eventually joining the early stages of a British campaign that was to be executed against the Turkish-Ottoman stronghold along the hostile windswept deserts and rugged mountainous region, of the west coast or Red Sea side of the Arab Peninsula. This campaign, had been designed to encourage and support an Arab insurgency against the Turkish-Ottoman Empire and was to be commanded by a very charismatic young British army officer, familiar to that area, by the name of Captain Thomas Edward Lawrence – this campaign later made famous in the 1962 movie, “Lawrence of Arabia,” starring Peter O’Toole. However, this setting could not have contrasted more with their simple but peaceful life in Hastings; living along the agricultural lowlands of south-central Asphodel, adjacent to the north shore of the pristine little Trent River or in the case of Private Barry, living just across the river within the rich agricultural lands and rolling drumlins of north Percy.

The first of these young Hastings lads to follow in the footsteps of Lieutenant Hubbs was Jim Barry. On August 9, 1915, Jim Barry at the age of 22, enlisted in the 8th CMR at their home base near Kingston Ontario. He signed up for a period that was to last the duration of the war, including an extension of six months following the war, at a pay rate of one dollar per day. Completing his medical examination that same day, weighing just 119 pounds, he marginally met the newly reduced physical requirements to enlist in the army. He was described as *5 ft 4.5 inches in Height; with a 38 inch Girth; with a Medium complexion, Blue eyes and with Brown Hair.*

The six other recruits who soon followed suit, based on the order of their ascending regimental numbers were: **Blackburn**, a Tanneryman from Hastings; **Triffie Joseph Guay**, Age-27, a Clerk-Tanner by occupation and the son of Mrs. Bougie of Peterborough, **William Joseph Powers**, Age-25, a Cheesemaker by occupation and the son of Pierce Powers, of Hastings. **James Ward Wharrie**, a Laborer by occupation, and the son of Mrs. James Wharrie of Hastings and brothers, **John Henry Scriver**, Age-32, listed as a “Tanneryman,” and the wife of Mamie Scriver of Hastings and **Albert Wesley Scriver**, Age-29, the son of Ethel Della Scriver of Hastings (later known as “Big Al”). Albert, at the time was listed as a “Teamster-Tanneryman.” A few weeks later, on August 19, 1915, all six recruits were “Attested” to and took their “Oath of Allegiance, with the recently reactivated 8th Canadian Mounted Rifles, following which, they all remained at Camp Barriefield, near Kingston to commence their Basic Training.

However, by this point, with the Middle East campaign completely stalemated at the Dardanelles and with both sides now, as on the Western Front, peering at each other from fortified trenches, the allied command reduced their Middle East force, redirecting a large component of this force to the much more desperate Western Front. Consequently, by the early fall of 1915, soon after the five Hastings men enlisted and no doubt, much to their disappointment, the soldiers of the various Canadian Mounted Rifle units were dismounted and recommitted as common foot soldiers to the beleaguered Canadian Corp in

Belgium – this ending any dreams of ever riding into glorious battle in those far away biblical lands.

Upon completion of the domestic portion of his Basic Training at Camp Barriefield, in early September of 1915, Private Jim Barry returned to his native little village of Hastings, where he completed his farewells and family visits. Among those he made a special effort to visit was his father’s first cousin, the much respected old friend, William John Barry, whom he had worked for some years earlier (my grandfather; from his Diary entry on September xx, 1916).

Thereafter, Private Barry departed his Hastings homeland on September 27, 1915, reporting back to his army unit at Camp Barriefield, at this point, fully anticipating an overseas assignment. On October 1, 1915 this order arrived, when Private Barry was assigned to the “Second Overseas Contingent,” where he was to join “B” Squadron of the 8th Canadian Mounted Rifles. Before he departed, he assigned \$15.00 per month of his \$1.00 per day salary to his mother, Catherine Condon-Barry of Hastings. Then, on October 19, 1915, exactly two months to the day of taking his Oath of Allegiance at Camp Barriefield, Private Barry disembarked for England. His unit was transported from Kingston to Montreal via Troop Train, from where they sailed down the Saint Lawrence River for England on the S. S Missanabie, a troop carrier that had been built in Scotland a few years earlier, but later sunk by the Germans, off the coast of Ireland in 1918.

On October 24, 1915, just a week or so after the S. S Missanabie set sail with the most recent recruits to the 8th CMR on board, the 4th CMR, their sister battalion, which had earlier landed in England with Jim’s old friend Private Runnels, was paraded through Folkestone, near Dover in Southern England, from where they immediately disembarked for France, landing in Boulogne sur Mer in North-West France that same day. Two days later this unit along with other Militia Units such as the 42nd Battalion (Royal Highlanders of Canada) and the 49th Battalion of Canada were assigned to the newly formed, Third Canadian Army Division in Belgium. As expected, this new army Division was immediately moved to the Front where they were assigned a trench area known as “Sanctuary Wood – this area being almost entirely in German possession. Consequently, Private Runnels, one of the first Hastings boys to enlist in the Army, now appears to have been the first Hastings soldier to be introduced first hand to the horrors of World War-1.

During the early days of the war, Sanctuary Wood had been one of the largest forests in the area of the Ypres Salient, near the little village of Zillebeke. It had been so named because the trees had been so thick that the British and Canadian forces had found them a gift from the gods, providing shelter for them as they turned back the Germans in their first attempt to gain control of the Ypres Salient in 1915. However, to remain calling the area a “Wood” was to give it courtesy, for it was now practically nothing but blasted out tree stumps, not unlike a Northern Ontario forest, after experiencing the ravages of a forest fire. Unfortunate, for the newly arriving Canadian troop, this blasted out forest became their nemesis, as it now offered excellent cover for crawling enemy patrols and snipers.

In early November of 1915, some weeks after Private Runnel was introduced to the horrors of the war, his friend Private Barry landed in England with the 8th CMR, where he was posted to Camp Bramshott, a Canadian army base set up on Bramshott Common, in Surrey England, some 45 miles south-west of London. There, he attended his first “Muster Parade” at on November 5, 1915, from where he was to remain for another three months or so, to complete more advanced military training.

Then, on New Year's Eve of 1915, as army expansion and reorganization continued in Belgium, the soldiers of the 8th CMR received another set back. Their unit was now completely dismantled, to provide reinforcements for the newly formed "Third Army Division." With their unit no longer in existence, many of the soldiers of this unit, now in their final stages of training at Camp Bramshott, were reassigned to the 4th Canadian Mounted Rifle, this battle hard group that had been experiencing losses on the front since early November, when they first saw action.

On January 29, 1916, after spending their first ever Christmas away from home, Privates Barry, Blackburn, Guay, Powers, and Wharrie were finally transferred to northern France, where they were all "Taken on Strength" with the 4th CMR. As part of the 3rd Canadian Army Division along the France-Belgium border, these five Hastings soldiers would soon be reunited with their other old friend, Private Reg Runnels, now a two month veteran of the front lines. Hopefully, during these early days of 1916, while reunited just behind the front lines in France, this enlarged Hastings contingent, now including Privates Barry, Blackburn, Guay, Powers, Wharrie and Runnels, would have found time for some valuable camaraderie, allowing them time to get together to reminisce of the good old days in Hastings, and to share each other's news from home.

Finally, on Thursday, March 9, 1916, the 4th CMR including Private Barry were assigned to "Active Service" and the next day they were transported up to the Billet area in Brigade Reserve at the Belgian Chateau, still some distance behind the front lines. Here while awaiting their final command to rotate into the trenches for the first time, the 4th CMR continued daily drill and other specialized training such as Grenade School and Bayonet training. A week or so later, on Saint Patrick's Day, Friday March 17, 1916, after a relatively light day of general clean up and tidying up their barracks, the 4th CMR formed up to meet their newly assigned Commander, upon which time they were given their marching orders; to move out to the front lines early the following morning. As daunting as this must have been for Private Barry, especially after receiving the command on such a special day for a young lad of Irish-Catholic origin, he non-the-less was probably relieved that he would finally have the opportunity to apply all the training and skills that he had worked so hard at over the past seven months of training. Private Jim Barry, like his parents back home, almost certainly would have started that day off attending religious services or holy Mass. That evening, after receiving his marching orders, he probably assumed the traditional exemption from his Lenten Fast and Abstinence, that was considered perfectly acceptable for a young man of Irish ethnicity, dawned some green attire and celebrated Saint Patrick's day as best possible, with some good old Irish music to accompany food and drinks in the Private's canteen. It would be a safe assumption, that the ever upbeat and gregarious Private Jim Barry would also have taken the opportunity to pull out his mouth organ and whittle out some of his favorite Irish and country tunes for his comrades, in an attempt to fray their jittery nerves.

The next morning, Saturday, March 18, 1916 at exactly 6:45 AM, the 4th CMR battalion formed up and marched out of the relative safety of their billets, with these young Hastings recruits about to see their first "Active Service in WW-1." No doubt with mixed feeling of trepidation and enthusiasm that first morning, the soldiers of the 4th CMR marched some five km North-East to the town of Poperinge in West Flanders. With the formation of the Third Canadian Army Division in Belgium, the Canadian area of defense had been expanded to include the Zillebeke Sector, a

trench area to the south-east of the much larger town of Ypres. So the following morning, Sunday, March 19th, 1916, after attending Devine Services, the 4th CMR boarded trains and proceeded on to the charred chaos of masonry in Ypres, en route to their ultimate destination, Zillebeke. Much to Private Barry's surprise and no doubt pleasure that day, a very experienced young officer and veteran of the Boer War by the name of Lieutenant Frederick Stanley Hubbs of Hastings Ontario, joined the Battalion in Ypres. Furthermore, this trusted old friend and fellow parishioner at "Our Lady of Mount Carmel" church in Hastings, Lieutenant Hubbs was assigned as senior officer over Private Barry's Company. However, of the original six Hastings Privates serving with the 4th CMR in Belgium, only Privates Barry and Blackburn remained as part of the front line contingent. As part of the New Years Eve shuffle, the two Scriver boys had been transferred to the Army Service Corp, Runnels had been assigned to another Company and Powers was now serving as a "Back Trench Warder." Most significantly though, Private Guay of Hastings had suffered from combat stress – a new phenomena experienced by the Allied troops, that had been termed "Shell Shock." Consequently, Guay, like some two percent of his comrades over the course of the war, was returned to base in England, as they although otherwise mentally stable, were considered unfit to serve on the front lines. Ironically, for Private Barry this milestone at Ypres represented the seventh anniversary of his Attestation into the Army at Camp Barriefield on August 19, 1915 as well as the five month anniversary of his disembarkation for England on October 19, 1915.

From Ypres, the 4th CMR marched on to their final destination, the army huts in the tiny village of Zillebeke, where a series of trenches ran around a tiny lake and Village of the same name – this forming the most forward and probably the most dangerous position within the Canadian line of defense. After relieving the British Ninth Battalion, of the British East Surrey Regiment, many of these young soldiers, including Private Barry appear to have engaged the enemy for the very first time; Sunday, March 19, 1916.

The following morning, Monday, March 20, 1916, the 4th CMR was on the move again, this time, marching further eastward again, to the original area of Canadian responsibility, the Sanctuary Wood. Here they would relieve the right Battalion of the 72nd Brigade. At Sanctuary Wood, their primary accomplishment seems to have been that the Snipers of their battalion kept the enemy snipers engaged to the point of completely shutting them down. After spending four days on the line, during which time four of their comrades were sadly killed and five more were wounded, the regiment was relieved by their sister unit, the 5th CMR on March 24th and moved back out to "Belgian Chateau" in Brigade Reserve.

After another four days of Rest and Relaxation in Brigade Reserve, early on the morning of Tuesday March 28, 1916, the soldiers of the 4th CMR, including Lieutenant Hubbs, Private Barry and Private Blackburn commenced their second tour or rotation into the front line trenches, where they again relieved their sister Battalion, the 5th CMR. However, part of the Battalion, including Lieutenant Hubs and Privates Barry and Blackburn were assigned to the western most and very dangerous "Zillebeke Sector," this area surrounded by German troops on three sides. Two days later on Thursday, March 30, 1916, Private Barry for the lack of a better expression, celebrated his 23rd birthday in the trenches at Zillebeke. To greet him on his birthday, the official and somewhat contradictory "War Diaries" for that day recorded the following: *Enemy was quiet;*

with very little Sniper and bombing at night.....he was apparently nervous, as numerous Parachute Flares were thrown up. Enemies Machine Guns were also active and bombs thrown during evening. Enemy Aircraft were also active, over our lines during the morning. An Enemy Machine Gun emplacement was located at angle of trench. This is the gun that sweeps our front lines and supports at night. Weather is fine and clear during morning, cloudy during later part of day.

However, according to family folklore, Jim again had his mouth organ in the trenches with him, possibly allowing him to celebrate during breaks in enemy activity, again whittling out some good old Hastings favorites.

The following morning Friday, March 31, 1915, a comrade wrote: "We are rich now, 10 bob (dollars) came our way.....Harrah for a Currant Bun and a cup of tea this morning." That day, the men of the 4th CMR, including the three Hastings lads, came under very heavy enemy shelling, as enemy aircraft also became much more active over the line. Additionally, there was also a report of gas cylinders in the Zillebeke battlefield sector, no doubt, mandating the dawning of gas masks.

The War Diary – The Intelligence Summary of the 4th Canadian Mounted Rifles for March 31, 1916, recorded the following: "Heavy Sniper activity and occasionally bombs being were thrown towards their location, but fortunately, all bombs fell short. During the night the enemy attitude was reported as "generally quiet," though sniping was still active. Enemy Artillery had been fairly active during the afternoon, about one-hundred 5.9 Howitzer Shells were sent into Sanctuary Wood - enemy aircraft were also reported over their lines at 6 o'clock AM and again around 6:30 PM. During that night, Lieutenant Clarke took out a wiring party, of 12 men, and strung 16 coils of French Concertina Wire across from behind an abandoned trench, extending from our their bombing post to the Listening Post of the Battalion on their left. Work was also done in an endeavor to make Sentim Road passable.

Very sadly, tragedy again struck the Canadian troops that fateful warm spring evening of Friday, March 31, 1916. In the shadows of dusk, as the sun set over nearby Lake Zillebeke and the tiny little Belgian village of the same name, Private James Barry of Hasting Ontario, fell to an enemy bullet – this only his second rotation into the front line trenches and only his ninth day of "tour" on the front lines. Private Jim Barry is said to have died almost instantly, at the much too young age of 23 years and one day. He had been serving on "Sentry Duty," - bravely standing guard over his comrades, as several of them were out of the safety of their trenches, stringing Barbed Wire. Considering, the sun had set only minutes earlier that evening; it is probable that a sudden burst of enemy Parachute Flares had momentarily lit the sky, enabling enemy Snipers, possibly perched in a burn-out tree stump in the area still ironically referred to as "Sanctuary Wood," to the south-east of the Canadian trenches to zero in on him. Consequently, Private James Barry became the first Hastings boy and also the first member of "Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church" in Hastings to be killed in action during WW-1.

A couple weeks later, on April 12, 1916, the dreaded Telegram arrived from the War Department in Ottawa. This official but very succinct and impersonal document addressed to Private Barry's parents, Mister William David Barry and his wife Catherine Condon-Barry read as follows: *Deeply regret to inform you Private James Barry, No. 113075, Mounted Rifles, was officially reported killed in action on March 31st.*

(Signed) "Adjagent General."

However, within a few days of his tragic death, Jim's superior officer and much respected old Hastings friend and now emotionally drained Lieutenant Frederick Stanley Hubbs had taken the time to write a very touching letter of condolence from the Brigade Reserve, to his old friend and associate at the Hastings Star, Mr. Pat Howard. In this letter Lieutenant Hubbs detailed the events associated with the loss of his old friend and fellow soldier, Private Jim Barry, but he also very considerably took the time to reassure everyone back home of the well being of their other loved ones. Fortunately, my Grandmother's scrapbook safeguarded a copy of this letter and two other related news paper articles from the old "Hastings Star," as no copies of this paper survived, the war years. This letter and articles read as follows:

Belgium, Sunday, April 2nd, 1916

Dear Pat; -

We just came out of the trenches this morning early, and in our hour in, we lost Jim Barry. He was on duty at his post as a century, like the good soldier he was, and a rifle bullet coming from the enemy's trench on our right struck him causing almost instantaneous death. It was on a Friday night, March 31st, about 8 P.M. I heard that a man was hit in our trench, and not imaging it was one of my own boys, did not get up for a moment, although I was only a short distance away, as it was not reported at once how serious it was, but on going up I found, to my sorrow, I found how serious it was, the serious loss to me personally.

He and Blackburn were the only Hastings boys with me, so you can see how it affected me. I suppose before this reaches you, you will have already known he is gone, and if not, I do not know of anyone else to break it to his folks. He is buried in a Canadian cemetery here, and the service was performed by Rev. Father Knox, our Brigade Chaplain.

Jim was a really good man and very valuable on account of his very sunny disposition and keeping everyone in good humor, under the most trying conditions as we have here, and they are very trying at times. His trinkets etc. go through the Official channels, and will reach his people in due course, but in the meantime I hope you can tell them he was a good soldier, a good man, and all his comrades and myself are mourning him for his own good sake, for we are all like a family out here, and when one like Jim goes, it is like the bright boy in the family gone. I can't write his people now, Pat. It is too heavy on me, and I am going to ask you to get it to them the best way you can, and any information I can give to them, I will. I cannot tell them the spot where he is buried, as we are not allowed, but his grave will be tended to by us, and fittingly marked. Tell them he died like a soldier and a man, at his post with his face to the front; and on duty. I don't know of any greater end than that, though any end at all was the last thing we wanted. We are in a hot place here. Powers is back trench Warder and Guay is at the base in England as he could not stand the pace. All the rest are OK. Wharrie is fine and the two Scrivers are A.S.C (Army Service Corp.) and so don't come up. I can't describe it here to you, Pat, but she is some show. The roar of the guns never ceases and shells are going over all the time, both ways. The houses upfront are all ruins and the cities a mass of charred walls and bricks. Back behind they are not touched any more than in England. Reg Runnels is here in another company and looks fine. You can tell his folks. I don't know of any more, so I will close for this time.

Fred.

Hastings Star, April 1916: When the telegram was received, word quickly spread throughout the Village of

Hastings, causing much regret for the loss of one who had given his life in effort to save his country. The Union Jack was placed at half mast at the Hastings Town Hall and at the residences of many of our citizens, showing the high esteem and as a token of respect for a worthy Canadian who fell trying to uphold the flag of Justice and Liberty."

Hastings Star, April 1916: *A memorial service was held in the Town Hall on Sabbath evening at 8:15, in memory of the late Private James Barry, who was killed in action on 31st ult. Private Barry was a son of Mr. and Mrs. W. D. Barry of Percy Township and is the first of our boys to fall in battle. He enlisted with the 8th C M R on Aug. 9th of last year. On Sept. 27th he left Hastings for Barriefield Camp, sailed for Britain on Oct. 9th, (Oct 19) and had been but a short time in the trenches. The Town hall was filled to capacity with soldiers and civilians, who manifested their sympathy with the parents and family of the deceased. The Reeve was in the chair and in a few well chosen remarks indicated the object of the meeting, and in his official capacity expressed the sympathy of the community with the parents who had given their son, who had offered his life as a supreme sacrifice for King & Country. Rev. Father C. S. Bretherton, pastor of the deceased, spoke in feeling terms of the heroic death of Private Barry, and urged young men to come forward and fill up the gaps made by such a fall in battle. At a subsequent stage he suggested that a suitable monument be raised at the close of the war in town for such men from Hastings and community as lay down their lives in such a great and good cause. The Reverends Snell and Thompson and Lieutenant Masson expressed the sympathy on behalf of those under their charge and spoke in praise of the life given in the interest of humanity. The band was also present and interspersed the proceedings with suitable selections.*

Barry family folklore, possibly just a more tenable or appeasing version of the tragic event holds a considerably different version of Private Jim Barry's death in the trenches on that fateful evening of March 31, 1916. It affectionately holds that Private Barry had again taken out his mouth organ and stood to whittle out a few tunes for his fellow soldiers, when he was taken down by the Sniper's bullet – this version of the tragic event certainly corresponding to Leighton Hobbs's comment of his sunny disposition and ability to keep his fellow troops entertained, under such trying circumstances.

Private Barry's Pay Roll assignment was stopped the following month, on April 30, 1916. On September 23, 1916 his mother Catherine Condon-Barry whom he had assigned his "beneficiary," received a final Pay Adjustment and Settlement in the mail, in the form of a cheque for \$49.49 after a debit of \$29.60 for his clothing was deducted.

Private Jim Barry of Hastings was originally buried in a temporary graveyard behind the "Advanced Dressing Station," behind the front lines, some 900 meters east of the village of Zillebeke, and just west of Sanctuary Wood, where most of the original Canadian burials took place during the early months of 1916. Unfortunately, during the later Battle of Mount Sorrel in June of 1916, these graves were mostly annihilated. By the time the "Commonwealth War Graves Commission" came to re-create

the cemetery, at the end of the War only 26 of the original 256 graves known to exist in the cemetery could be located or identified.

Consequently, the remaining 230 men are commemorated on Special Memorials, in the newly created Maple Copse Cemetery, just west of Sanctuary Wood. They have separate headstones headed with the words "Known to be buried in this Cemetery." To this day, this cemetery is maintained immaculately by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. It is located some 5 km South East of the Town of Leper, near the village of Zillebeke in north-west Belgium, near the much larger and more famous Flanders Fields Cemetery.

Private Jim Barry's mother, Catherine Condon-Barry was said to have never recovered from the tragic loss of her dear son and for the rest of her life, she is said to have suffered from declining health. She died twelve years later on August 18th, 1928, some 13 year after her son Jim Barry enlistment in the Canadian Expeditionary Force.

The fate of Private Barry's eight other Hastings comrades of the Canadian Mounted Rifles were as follows:

Private Will Powers; was taken a Prisoner-Of-War on April 29, 1916, only a month after the loss of his old friend and comrade, Private Barry, during the Battle of Mont Sorrel, part of that planned push, to break through the enemy lines. He died the following month, while in captivity on June 8, 1916.

Private Joseph Wharrie was promoted to Lance Corporal, but died of wounds, on September 25, 1916, some six months after the death of his old friend and comrade, Private Barry. His wounds were presumably received during the "Battle of the Somme," also part of a push through enemy lines.

Lieutenant Frederick Stanley Hubbs was shortly thereafter promoted to the rank of Captain, but was taken a "Prisoner-Of-War" on June 3, 1916 during the Battle of Mont Sorrel – this occurring within a couple months of writing that emotional and heart filled letter to his friend Pat Howard at the Hastings Star. He was repatriated after the war on June 14, 1918 and resumed his position at the Hastings Star.

Private George Walter Blackburn was taken a "Prisoner-Of-War" on July 20, 1916, also during the Battle of Mont Sorrel. He was repatriated to Canada on the December 20, 1918 and Struck off Strength on April 1, 1919.

Private Reg Runnels survived the war as the longest serving soldier from Hastings during WW-1 and was eventually promoted from Private to Field Lieutenant. He was "Struck-off-Strength" on June 26, 1918 and returned to Hastings.

John Henry and Albert Wesley Scriver were both transferred to the Army Service Corp, serving the remainder of the war behind the front lines and both safely returned home after the war.

Private Triffie Joseph Guay was diagnosed with "Shell Shock" on July 25, 1916 and spent the remaining years of the war at a base in England. He was Struck-off-Strength three years later on June 11, 1919 and returned to Hastings.

Astonishingly, of the 600,000 or so Canadians who served during WW-1, an alarming 56% of them were either killed or wounded in this "the war that was to end all wars."

Homesteading in Saskatchewan

My Eighty Years, 1877 to 1957, Part 1, second instalment

James McConnell (1877-1959)

Going to Saskatchewan

However, having seen the rich and fertile land in the West, so level and adapted to farming with machinery, I lost interest in our hilly land so full of stones. I rented out the farm that father had given me and I again made preparations to go West. Father bought me a good new trunk and my sisters, Annie and Edith, fitted me out with mitts, socks and blankets.

I was well prepared now and took the train early in September of 1906. I was soon in Saskatchewan, working at the thrashing, driving a stock team for my cousins, and hauling sheaves to the thrashing machine at Sentaluta, Saskatchewan. The days were long as we worked from daylight till dark, but the time soon passed, and by 20 October the thrashing was finished.

The separator man also wanted to look for a homestead, and by 25 October, Jason Nicoll, my cousin, and Charlie McLean and myself, were in Regina, Saskatchewan at the Land Office to find where suitable homestead land was available. While in Regina we met Abram Thrasher who lived west of the Saskatchewan River in the homesteading area. Mr. Thrasher agreed to drive us out and show us the land, and to get each of us a free quarter section for fifty dollars.

There were no cars then so we took the train to Hanley, and from there, Mr. Thrasher drove us west in his double seated open carriage. We crossed the South Saskatchewan River by Ferry, near where the town of Outlook now stands. Continuing west and south, we spent Sunday at Mr. Thrasher's home, near where the town of Thrasher now stands.

On Monday we drove west and spent the night with a little group of settlers who had come in from the U.S.A. some time before – Mr. Reed, Mr. Hicks and Mr. Biglow. Mr. Reed put us up for the night and we got our first look at the dark side of the picture. We noticed Mrs. Reed crying, and soon we learned that their youngest child had taken sick. There was no doctor to be had, and soon their child died. They buried their little loved one there alone on the Prairie. It was a sad picture but really made very little impression on us, for by now we had got a look at part of this vast land yet untouched by the plow.

Millions of acres of level prairie land, rich in fertility, waited to be taken up and brought into tillage by the new settlers. There were practically no buildings – only a few shacks, and most of them built with sod – and miles apart. No roads had been made yet. If you asked the way to a certain place ahead you were told “Just follow the main

travelled trail.”

Next morning, leaving Messrs. Reed, Hicks and Biglow, we continued East and North. Never before in my life had I looked upon such a wide expanse of level fertile land.

Late in the evening we arrived at Mr. Mills' place. He kept the Mills' P.O. When the railroad came through later, it was called Milden. We stayed over night at Mills' place. Some farming had been done here. Some grain had been thrashed, and also some fair sized houses had been built.

Getting a homestead

In the morning we drove down and crossed the river by ferry. We arrived in Hanley in time to catch the south bound train for Regina. Next day when we came to the Land Office it was a disappointment to find that most of the land we had examined was now already taken. Jason Nicoll and I had planned to settle on adjoining quarters. This now seemed impossible, but over west and north of where we had travelled there were two quarters open for filing, with only the school section between. We each took a quarter, paid our locating fee to Mr. Thrasher, and he gave us a written guarantee that he would get us other quarters if these were not good.

Our companion, Charlie McLean, got a quarter away south of ours, in the next Township. We parted company and we never saw him again.

On this memorable day, 3 November 1906, by taking land to homestead we began with many others, the Herculean task of bringing this great expanse of wild open prairie under cultivation – to produce wheat and other grains to feed generations yet to come.

Now that our homesteads had been located, Nicholl and I went back to Sentaluta for the winter. I hired with a farmer, Mr. John Martin, perhaps ten miles north east of Sentaluta, hauling his wheat out to Sentaluta, and doing the winter chores.

That winter was notorious for its severity. There was one cold bitter storm after another, and for weeks at a time the mercury stood at 40 degrees below zero. By spring, the winter road bed had built up with the continuous snow blowing over it, until it was like a high railroad grade all the way to Sentaluta and all through the country.

As springtime drew near, Martin let me have the team and a sleigh some days, and J. Nicoll and I began looking for our homestead equipment. We each bought four large three year old steers – to be broken in for oxen. Then we attended auction sales and bought the wagons and what other machinery we needed for the homestead.

I now quit my work with John Martin and we bought ox harness and began every day breaking the oxen to drive by hitching them to an old sleigh, giving each team a drive every

day as well as we could.

The spring of 1907 continued bitterly cold with driving winds and zero temperatures. About 1 May we loaded all our supplies into a freight car – also the eight oxen, and filled our car for Swift Current. The old car broke down and had to be repaired in Moose Jaw. I remember jumping out of the car at Moose Jaw on 2 May on a pond frozen over, and the ice easily carried my weight.

Two days later on arriving at Swift Current we began to understand a little of the immensity of the migration that was in progress, as car loads of settlers' effects were arriving from all over Eastern Canada and the United States. They switched us out onto a siding which was over a mile long. It was blocked with settlers' cars which were unloading. Many had just unloaded and their belongings were piled up across from the track. All this length of track was piled with wagons, binders, and all kinds of farm equipment. We had to have plenty of patience as we waited our turn to get in line so as to get to our car. Our green oxen had to be either tied or unhitched as we loaded and unloaded.

We hauled all the stuff six miles north of Swift Current, to a homesteader's place. He had offered us an empty building to store our goods while we took the first loads north to our homesteads.

Then on a fine May morning we headed north with our four oxen on each loaded wagon. As the bright May sun melted the snow there were pools of water in low places.

About 9 a.m. we came to a pond in the road, and boggy land on either side. We rested our oxen. I was ahead, and using the whip, hurried right through onto hard ground. Nicolls' team stopped to drink, and his load settled down. Each time they pulled, then let it sag back, so I attached our chain to his wagon and hooked on ahead. But when my team pulled, the wagon team held back and would not move.

Noon came and our situation looked bad. We had lunch, dug out the wheels and tried again, only with the same results. Only one team would pull at a time. We talked of packing all the load out to shore, but decided to keep on. Finally, about 4 p.m., we lined up and straightened up the two teams and the whole eight oxen leaned into their collars. The wagon load began to move and never stopped until it was out on dry land. We had both done a little shouting, which may have helped some too.

The next day was Sunday so we soon chose a level place where there was grass for the oxen. We unhitched and hobbled the oxen so they could feed, put up our tent and quietly settled down until Monday morning.

On Monday, heading north, we eased the loads down to the ferry by locking one hind wheel with a chain. We both felt much happier when we landed safely on the north shore of the Saskatchewan River. Soon we were winding our way up the hill to the plains above. The sun was bright and warm and we noticed a heavy smell as we reached the top. We rested our oxen and walked over a little to the west and looked down into a hollow. Oh, what a sight – for that

hollow was piled with dead cattle – all now bloating in the sun. This was our first sight of the awful havoc done in that long cold and stormy winter of 1907.

We continued our way north, and one cold wet day we arrived at a tent in Township 28 R.14 W. Third. In that tent we found four of our homestead neighbors: Jim and George McGregor, Jim Hay and Bob Sanson. George McGregor may be living in Scotland.

On the homestead

After getting acquainted we continued on to Jason Nicolls' Quarter, the N.W. 28, Township 28, R.14, West Third. With our thirty foot tether chains we tied out our oxen on the grass, put up our tent, and felt quite at home. Next morning as Jason was preparing breakfast, I hurried over to the school section, and for the first time got a look at my homestead. It was a splendid quarter, gently sloping to the west and north. Here was to be my home for the next five years. Here I was to bring my young wife three years later, and here our first boy was to be born. It is little wonder I went back to breakfast that morning with what amounted to a very possessive assurance of the future.

We prepared our new riding plows and took one 4 ox team to teach them to pull the plow. We had another big disappointment. The oxen pulled well on a wagon rolling along, but when we slipped the plow into that stiff solid clay they just stopped and pulled off sideways, thus throwing the plow out. It took patient training for another week to get our oxen to pull the plow along slow and to keep straight.

Then we found our land much too sticky for moleboard plows. We had to take our plows to a blacksmith and remove the moleboards and substitute three ¾" steel rods to turn the sod furrow over.

Our first work was to plow a fireguard, eight or nine furrows wide, right around our quarters so that no grass fire would cross. Then we had to plow a few acres as required by homestead regulations. This we seeded to oats for feed.

One day in June, having staked out the oxen on fresh grass, I walked away 12 miles south east to see a quarter section I had bought. I stayed overnight with a young man who wanted to abandon his land and sell his shack, which was 12'x16', and other equipment. I needed a house and offered to buy him out, but had no cash. Next day I walked away home, wondering how to get the money to buy that house.

A very pleasant surprise awaited me. Arriving back at our tent, I found my father there. He had come from Ontario to see me, and to see this new country. He had the money I needed, so early next morning we started back with the four ox team and wagon. We bought the shack and all equipment, loaded it on the wagon and were back home late that night. After digging out a little cellar for a store room we were not long getting the house up.

Father left after a short visit and went back to Ontario. With a snug little house to live in I felt a little more secure on this wide open treeless plain.

Now I must report a little about those 1907 mosquitoes. They came as soon as the snow had melted and the weather warmed up. They were the huskiest and the hungriest that I

had ever seen. The grass in most places was long, and when the wind blew they stayed in the grass, but the minute it was calm they came – not one or two – but just as many as could get a roosting place on your face or neck or any exposed place. We had them that year until August.

Another discomfort we soon discovered was the shortage of water. When the ground frost went out, the surface ponds immediately dried up. We had to get barrels on the wagon and drive five miles to a spring for water. This took a good half day with the oxen, and water had to be hauled about twice a week.

And now as the summer advanced, a stable would have to be provided before winter came again. The only building material available within reach was sods, and a little slough of water grass on the next quarter would supply plenty of sods. Not having material to frame the stable, I borrowed a wagon and made a trip away east to the hills near the Saskatchewan River. By trailing one team behind the other I brought back two loads of poplar poles.

The equipment taken was a week's provisions, a water pail to water the oxen, tethering chains and a couple of blankets. Late at night when the oxen got tired, I tied them out where there was plenty of good grass. Then putting the water pail under the end of the wagon tongue to hold it up off the ground and throwing a blanket over the tongue, I was able to make a comfortable shelter from the wind. I would then crawl in with the other blanket and go to sleep.

In the bush, the best poles had already been taken, but with two days of hard work, two loads were cut and carried out and loaded on the wagons. I managed to get back within six days with two good loads of poplar poles. In the remaining warm days in September a substantial pole roof was framed and put on the stable and covered with hay; then more sods were hauled and the whole roof neatly covered with sods, dirt side up.

Wintering the oxen

The weather now got much colder and I decided to have the oxen wintered while I worked out. So with the oxen and wagon and travelling equipment I started east for Hanley. What I had feared had already happened. When I reached Mills' place I learned that they had taken out the ferry and that the Saskatchewan River was frozen over and unsafe for travelling or for heavy loads. Like all homesteaders at this time of year, I was running very short of cash. Leaving Mills' place early, I arrived at the river flat about 9:30 a.m. to find the whole river a sheet of glare ice.

Taking the axe, I picked a path right across the river where I tested the ice and considered it safe. Then with the shovel and water pail I sanded this path right across the river, for the oxen. It took a good part of the day. Then, by taking the quietest ox, I tried to lead him out on that path. However, he would not venture as he felt his feet slip and he refused to move. So, taking some empty sacks I carefully tied one up around each foot and tied one over his eyes. Now he seemed to trust me leading him, and very slowly and carefully picked his steps until he got right

across.

Each trip brought an ox over, but the fourth ox also had to pull the wagon behind him with a chain hooked to the end of the tongue. By sundown I had made my way up the hill from the river flat and found a place where I could get the oxen fed, and stay overnight. I felt much more content now that the river was behind us.

Looking for a winter job

Next day I found a farmer who was willing to care for the oxen, and I was soon on my way to Hanley and Saskatoon seeking employment for the winter. There were no Government Offices to give first hand information to the unemployed in those days, and after trampling around Saskatoon for a day I continued on to Prince Albert. The second day at Prince Albert I got a job with an old-timer there, a Mr. Clark, cutting cordwood down by the river. His wife was sick with Typhus Fever and they had a nurse hired. I lived in a little log cabin down near the river. There were not very big wages made at this work – cutting and piling cordwood at 75 cents per cord.

One day when in town I heard of Cowell's Cordwood Camp, and the next day I went down the river on the ice with a team that hauled in the wood. Cowell paid \$1 a cord for cutting and piling dry Jack Pine, and the men paid \$1 a day for their board. The trees were scattered and when felled, buried themselves about 16" in the cold dry snow. Some of the boys, not experienced, were going behind and not able to pay their board. I found it hard to make \$1 a day clear. After working a couple of weeks I settled up and went back to town.

Next day I hired out with railroad contractors Willmott and Woodward. In the winter they took out ties. Their camp was at Mistatim, down east towards Tisdale, near the border of Manitoba. I hired out to drive team and was soon at work with team and sleigh, gathering the ties in the bush and unloading them along the railroad.

It was below zero weather. The first morning I turned off the road to gather up the hewed ties laying in the deep loose snow. My hind sleigh slid in behind a ten inch tree and I could not move it. My first job was to take my axe and down that tree. After that I took a little more care in getting around the trees in the deep snow.

These contractors paid \$26 a month and board. The work continued right through until Spring. Their main crew stayed for the summer to work on the railroad, but they paid us up and we took the first train back to Prince Albert. The next day I arrived at Hanley where I bought up supplies for the summer of 1908. I picked up the oxen and wagon and was soon heading west again for another six months residence on the homestead. The snow had gone so it was now urgent to begin again that thankless, yet necessary, job of hauling water.

Back on the homestead

The ground already broken, was disked and planted to oats. I continued to break up more land as required by the Homestead Regulations.

By now there were more settlers coming in and little houses were being built on all sides. Progress had to be slow as there

was no water supply and no timber for fuel or building. The summers were hot and dry. Later in the season I decided to make a dug out, or dam, as they were called at that time. A slight draw or depression led down onto my quarter from the school section. About 100 feet inside my east line, I plowed and began scraping out a hole about 30 feet wide and 60 feet long, and with oxen and scraper moved the dirt – building a bank or dam across the draw so as to catch all the water that came down the draw from heavy rain or melting snow.

Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, 1920s



Day after day I plowed and scraped at this dug out and built up the bank by tramping it with the oxen until I knew that if this ever filled up I would have a whole season's supply of water. The next year I planted trees around the dug out to catch the drifting snow.

The oats sown in 1908 grew well. I cut and stacked them near the stable. Later on the Goodroe boys came along with a little thrashing machine. The mill was driven with a treadmill and a team of horses tied in the treadmill drove the thrashing machine.

That same year there was an election and I can remember Odie Blais driving a few of us up to vote at J. Coulter's home, just one mile south of where Rosetown now stands. The C.N.R. grade was built, and also a grade alongside for side track. We all walked down and looked it over. I took a little hard lump of earth from the grade and mailed it home, stating that it was from the beginning of the future city of Rosetown. Now, 45 years later, that prediction of mine has really come true. Rosetown is now one of the most active centres in all that vast area so recently brought under the plow.

Another winter of labour

The six months residence for 1908 now completed, I again took the oxen and wagon and started off, this time by way of Zealandia and the new railway. The C.N.R. had the rails laid as far as Zealandia. Passing Zealandia about sundown I kept on, but could find no water for the oxen. When they got tired I unhitched and tied them out on the frosty grass to feed. It was too cold to sleep in the open and I was up and going long before daybreak.

Continuing along the new well-beaten trail I came to Delisle before night and found a farmer who could keep the oxen for the winter. I left for Saskatoon the next morning, and then on to Prince Albert. That night my room mate was an engineer from Rouleau, Saskatchewan, Nat Hawkins. We spent most of the winter together.

Next day we found a logging contractor who was hiring men for bush work up north of Prince Albert. His name was Al Hero. About twelve of us started out, having put our rolls of clothes or blankets on the teamster's wagon. We all walked or ran behind to keep up. At night we came to a stopping place where we got beds and breakfast. As breakfast proceeded, the

proprietor began collecting from the men at the door as they went out. My appetite failed me, for by now I was flat broke. I went up to him and told him frankly that I had no money. He replied in a loud voice for all to hear, "Well, do you think because I am a few miles out of town that I run a free show here?" I offered to try and borrow the money. "Well, see that you do then," he replied. I asked Nat Hawkins, and he lent me the money and I was able to pay my way. This made quite an impression on me, being the only time I can remember not being able to pay for my breakfast.

That night we arrived at the camp. No beds were available so we all crowded into the eating camp and the cook let us spread our blankets on the floor. As soon as all laid down we were asleep for everyone was so tired tramping and running after the wagon. Next morning we noticed the foreman keeping some of the men as they came from the camp, and afterwards sending them on their way. There was no Union to appeal to for fair play in those days. When these men were gone we all had beds to sleep in that night, but we knew now that our time might soon be coming.

Two weeks later, Hawkins came to me as we were turning out to work. He asked me to pay him the money I had borrowed; he told me that he had been fired. On 4 January, on a cold bitter morning, I also was paid off and sent down the road with my roll of blankets and clothes on my back. Travelling to other camps, who should I meet but Nat Hawkins. He had been fired again that morning, so we tramped along together and before night we arrived at a large camp which was under quarantine for some disease. They could take men in but could not send men out.

We decided to take our chances here. We got our sleeping bunks and the next morning went to work. Here we stayed until the end of March. Hawkins had some horses running out and he wanted to get them gathered up, so I decided to go out with him. The boss, Mr. Thompson, made out our time and set our wages at \$20 a month. It seemed pretty tough for we had been working hard and long hours. The last month we had been putting in nearly eleven hours a day. We got a chance of a ride on a sleigh that was driving down to Prince Albert for supplies.

At Thompson's office in town they only wanted to pay us the \$20 a month and get rid of us, but Hawkins proved to be a pretty good actor. He just turned for the door, saying to me, "Come on, Jim, we will see if they can pull this on us." And before we got to the door they called us back and paid us both \$26 a month, that being the going wage for bush work at that time.

We spent the night together in Prince Albert. Hawkins headed to his farm at Rouleau, and I left for Delisle.

Upon arriving at Patterson's place at Delisle the snow was still deep and winter still prevailed. Patterson sold me a couple of heavy planks and some lumber and nails. I prepared the planks for sleigh runners, then built a sleigh, the same width as the bob sleighs on the road. On this I put the wagon and box and the provisions for 1909.

Getting lost on the prairie

Early next morning I hitched two of the oxen to the sleigh and tied the other two behind and started the homeward journey. An incident that day impressed my memory. When I got down to Harris, the road was all drifted in full of snow, and late in the evening I took a wrong turn and soon found myself up in the bush where they had been cutting wood. It was much too cold to stop and camp so I kept on driving slowly through the bush. After a long while I felt the sleigh cross something hard, and going back I found it to be the main travelled road. I turned the sleigh around and got on the hard road again.

After travelling along some distance there appeared a dark object to the right of the trail, which proved to be a house. After I had made considerable noise, the door was opened and a man looked out. I sure was glad to see him, and told him I had become lost off the road. The oxen were tired and I was cold. He showed me where to tie the oxen in the shed and asked me to come to the house. I fed the oxen their hay, packed in my roll of blankets, spread them on the floor and went to sleep.

It seemed that morning came almost immediately and my host was up and cooked me a substantial breakfast and then wished me well as I rolled my blankets for my journey. He would take no pay for the real kindness he had shown me. I was given directions to Zealandia, which I soon passed, and continued on slowly mile after mile and I arrived home that night.

The third homesteading season

There were piles of snow still drifted over the stable. I dug out the door and got the oxen in and fed. Now began the third and last season of homestead duties required by the Government to get a clear title for the quarter section. Some progress had been made. The dam was full of snow, and as it melted, water was stored up enough for the Spring and Summer.

Seventy acres had been broken and worked down ready for the seed. The south winds and sunny days began to reduce the snow and by April 15th the land was dry enough to begin working on the land. Considerable activity was now to be seen everywhere. More people were coming in, and more houses were being hurriedly built. Some were

digging wells to get water.

It was now clearly evident that the humble "Homesteader" had won out on the first round of this titanic struggle against heat and drought and solitude in summer and snow and blizzards and relentless cold in winter. This vast territory – the last great west extending away west into Alberta was being subdivided and brought under cultivation to add to the food supply as the population increased.

When the ground was dry enough I sowed the seventy acres to oats and worked the land down smooth, before continuing the breaking of more land. Everyone was doing so as a railroad would soon carry our grain to market.

Early in the spring of 1909 the C.N.R. extended its rails westward, and the town of Rosetown sprung up. Just in a few weeks, streets were laid out, stores were built, lumber yards were opened, and homes built to live in. As lumber was closer, settlers began hauling it out and building new granaries for the crops now growing.

More neighbors came, all friendly and eagerly looking toward the future, and the days passed quickly. Soon the oats were ripe and I had to teach the oxen how to pull the binder and turn the corners, and it surprised me how quickly they learned and how well they did it. I soon found myself with seventy acres of heavy oat bundles down and ready to stook up. As the days were still long and fine, the stooking was soon completed.

Threshing

Who was going to do the thrashing? We soon learned that Dick Hutchinson, our neighbor, had bought a large thrasher, driven by a steam engine and he would be ready to thrash the whole neighborhood. However, Dick unloaded his machine at Zealandia and began to thrash where there were larger fields of stooks ready. He was soon taken down with typhus fever, and his brother, Jim, took over and ran the machine.

October slowly passed. The weather got colder. The big machine got close until it was right beside my quarter, but the November weather became severely cold and snow came. I went over one morning as they steamed up and asked Jim Hutchinson to thrash mine before he pulled away. He said he could not operate a steam outfit outside in this weather and that he had to get the machine home – and home they went. The cold increased. The glass in my windows filled out level with the frame with frost. Deep snow drifted over my oat stooks, covering them all out of sight.

Dick Hutchinson died of the typhus fever, at his home where his wife had been nursing him. I went to Dick's funeral, and it was the first open grave I had seen in this great new country.

That day the weather broke. The snow began to melt and the south Chinook wind continued to blow all night. Next morning all the snow had disappeared, and the south wind continued to blow warm. My opportunity had arrived – I must stook those oats. I immediately got the neighbors with teams and wagons and began stacking. In about three days the whole 70 acres were stacked. And then what – in less than a week along comes a little thrashing machine driven by a gas engine. It came from the north and did all the small jobs as it came along. Soon it was set by my oat stacks and in a couple of days all my oats were thrashed and in the bins.

Revolutionary War Pension Attestation

The following is a transcript of the Revolutionary War pension attestation submitted by John Steele of Salem New York. Ruth Kuchinad acquired the document during her research on the Steele family and quickly saw that it would be of wide interest to our readers.

28 August 1832

State of New York, County of Washington

On this twenty eighth day of August one thousand eight hundred and thirty two, personally appeared in their Court before the judge of the Court of Common Pleas of the County of Washington now sitting. John Steele resident of the town of Salem in said county of Washington and State of New York, aged seventy three years who being first duly sworn according to law doth on his oath make the following declaration in order to obtain the benefit of the act of Congress passed June 7, 1832.

That he was born in the year 1759 in the County of Derry in the town of Dengibbon in Ireland but has no record of his age – came to the new town of Salem in the County of Washington and the State of New York in the Month of May 1772 and has ever since continued to and does now reside in said town.

That he entered the service of the United States under the following named officers and served as herein stated,

That some time in the month of April 1775 he was enrolled in the company of militia commanded by Captain Hutchinson in the Regiment commanded by Colonel John Williams, and some time about the month of July 1777 (while Captain Joseph McCracken, who with his company had been sent from the army at Stillwater to protect & defend the inhabitants of the North) and Colonel Van Dooert with a part of his Regiment were employed in building a picket fort in Salem, he was called out in the said company (which was then commanded by Captain Thomas Armstrong, Captain Hutchinson having resigned) to assist in building the said Fort at which he was employed three weeks and was there dismissed. Colonel Williams was out in person at the building of the Fort.

In the month of September 1777 he was called out in the said company by Captain Armstrong and Colonel Williams & marched to Argyle & reconnoitered the flank of General Burgoyne's camp by the way of Fort Miller near the mouth of Battenkill & from thence returned to Salem (then New Perth) & from there was sent to Williamstown where he became the body servant of Colonel Williams who was conductor of Burgoyne Hospital & went with him to Boston & continued with him - as such servant until the Month of March 1778 when he was dismissed.

Some time in the month of November 1778 he was again called out in said company under Captain Armstrong & Colonel Williams aforesaid on an alarm & went to Skeensborough & was employed in Scouting on Lake Champlain & South Bay - that he served in said company two weeks & was then dismissed.

In March 1779 (his company being then commanded by Captain John Armstrong with Regiment by Colonel

Alexander Webster) he was called out to Skeensborough by, and served under these officers one month (by classing); two weeks of which time he was a substitute for his father.

In the year 1779 he enlisted for the term of nine months as a substitute for one Brown or Abram Van Dorker in the company commanded by Captain Levy Stockwell who was stationed at Skeensborough ; that he continued to serve in said company until the expiration of said nine months – cannot state what month of the year he enlisted but knows he served until this time expired and thinks that the expiration of the said nine months was the 1st day on January 1780.

Some time about the month of October in the year 1780 he was called out in the said company in which he was enrolled under the said Captain John Armstrong & Colonel Alexander Webster on an alarm created by the irruption of Major Carlton into the Northern part of New York at which time Fort George & Anne fell into the hands of the enemy; that he continued to serve in said Company on said alarm five weeks & was then dismissed.

Sometime in the fall of the year 1781 he was again called out in said company under the last aforesaid officers & was posted at Alexander Simpsons & other places; that he continued to serve in said one month and was then dismissed.

In the fall of the year 1782 he was called out in the said company under the aforesaid officers & posted at Colonel Williams & other places & was employed principally in scouting; that he con't to serve in said company one month & was then dismissed.

He was also out in the fall of the year 1782 (in the month of November he thinks) in the company of militia commanded by Captain John Mundon in the Regiment commanded by Colonel Brown; that he was posted in said company at Whitehall then Skeensborough and continued to serve therein two weeks & was there dismissed ; that from his situation he had little opportunity of knowing officers or Regiments other than his own; that he never received any aid charge, has no documentary evidence of his services & knows of no person whose testimony he can procure who can testify to the same except Allen Homsdon whom is deponent aforesaid opinion that he is known to Alexander Proudfit , Doctor of Divinity and pastor of the church to which this applicant belongs and to John Crary Esquire both of whom reside in the said town of Salem in the County of Washington & State of New York, and can testify to his character for veracity and their belief of his service as a Soldier of the Revolution.

He hereby relinquishes every claim whatever to a pension or annuity except the present, and declares that his name is not on the pension roll of the agency of any state,

Sworn to & subscribed the day & year aforesaid.

John Steele

I.S. Leigh CWB

Queries

Diane Robnik

John Steele

Does anyone here have information about John Steele, Revolutionary War scout. I may be related.

Ruth (Steele) Kuchinad
Smith Ennismore Lakefield

Dr Merriam and Teddy Roosevelt

The archivist for the television program asked for assistance in identifying a Dr. Merriam who gave a club to Teddy Roosevelt in 1912. Here is part of the exchange on the issue. It shows how quickly an archivist can track down the details and assist a researcher working with a tight deadline. The episode of "History Detectives" will be airing soon and we will let our members on email know when the show will be appearing. The emails between Diane Robnik and Andy Montaya are arranged with the most recent first.

DR Sent: April 19, 2011 2:26 PM.

Apparently while Teddy Roosevelt was campaigning he was shot in 1912 by a saloon keeper. Perhaps Dr. Merriam was treating him and gave him the club as a gift. How else would Merriam meet the former pres?

AM Sent: April 19, 2011 2:18 PM

The club reads

"Taken from the Green Mountains near the city of Rutland, Vermont. and presented to the Chi___ the Great Chief, Teddy Roosevelt, August 29, 12 by Dr. S.D. Merriam, also known as Chief Flying Eagle."

I'm downloading the earlier e-mail attachments. Do you have any indication as to whether Merriam had Indian ancestry if he was born in Hiawatha? I understood from our earlier conversation that he MIGHT have been born on a reservation or close to one. Perhaps the attachments will tell me -- but in case not, the question heads your way.

DR sent On Apr 19, 2011, at 2:09 PM,

What else does it say on the club? It looks like a lot of writing. I sent up 18 attachments so they should be coming your way.

Diane Robnik

AM Sent: April 19, 2011 2:03 PM

I'm attaching a picture of the club are with text on it. This is under a special light that reveals where ink had appeared previously even if it has since faded. The bottom line says "known as Chief Flying Eagle". It's a wooden club (as opposed to a golf club).

Would you mind if we had a look at the article. We're literally on our toes with anticipation. Are you saying in your last e-mail that there are ads for Merriam's services on the Peterborough Examiner as well? and that they don't look like the ones I sent you? How odd! Perhaps he had a very marked sense of humor?

DR sent On Apr 19, 2011, at 1:49 PM,

Weird.....do you have a picture of the club? Is it a wooden club or a golf club? Where does he use the nickname "Chief Flying Eagle?"

Diane Robnik

AM Sent: April 19, 2011 1:46 PM

Thanks, it will be great to have a starting point for understanding the region and its population. One of the mysteries for us has been deciphering why this club that was given to Roosevelt during his campaign under the newly formed Progressive party was called a "War Club" and whether this has anything to do with Merriam's use of the nickname "Chief Flying Eagle".

DR sent On Apr 19, 2011, at 1:34 PM,

I'll also send up a small history of Hiawatha so you can understand the region.

AM Sent: April 19, 2011 1:23 PM

Hey Diane:

Just letting you know I'm out of my episode watch-down now. Several of us on our team are terribly psyched for an update on your findings. We are scheduled to send a rough cut of the story - and your findings might actually call for some story re-writing... which is favorable so long as we are closer to historical accuracy, of course.

Thanks!

DR sent On Apr 19, 2011, at 11:03 AM,

The article says he was a dr in Mass, but also born at Hiawatha in Peterborough County so I'm quickly following that lead for you. Will send by noon.

AM Sent: April 19, 2011 10:48 AM

How absolutely exciting!

Would you be able to scan and e-mail me the article, however grainy or "micro-filmy" it may be. This investigation has taken so many twists and turns (one of which being that originally we thought the war club gifted to Roosevelt said "Merrigan" - later to find out it was S.D. Merriam). We were convinced that Mr. Merriam lived in Western Massachusetts - but since his trade might have been "quackery", I'm not entirely surprised to see an article about him surface across Lake Ontario. We're actually about to wrap on it - so this is exciting to hear about,

even if at the last minute, and it could be an exciting close to the story!

DR sent On Apr 19, 2011, at 10:25 AM,
Hi Andy,

Just letting you know that I **do** have that article you are searching for. It has provided some clues to additional leads so I will attempt to find out what else I can about him. Feel free to give me a call at the archives or email if you prefer.

Thanks,

The original email:

"I'm an archivist on a PBS (U.S.A) program called History Detectives. We are working on a story on a club that was

gifted to Teddy Roosevelt in 1912 while he campaigned in Vermont, US. The individual who gave this to him appears to have been a Dr. S.D. Merriam. Very little information exists on S.D. Merriam online, except enough to know that he was a botanist who claimed himself an ""Indian doctor"". I am told by a historian in Pittsfield, Massachusetts that an article appeared in the December 1891 issue of the Peterboro Examiner with the name ""23 Years Absent - Dr. S.D. Merriam (Civil War Vet)"". I wondered if you might have this article in your archives - and whether I might be able to view it by e-mail or online since I am in New York City. My hope is that the article has a photo of Dr. Merriam or information about the man behind what has now become a myth in our story. Thanks so much.

Andy Montoya

The Brackenridge Scrapbook Clippings

1914

DEATH OF FRANCIS BIRDSALL

Was Member of One of the Oldest Families of East Peterborough – Took Prominent Part in All Public Matters.

On Wednesday night, the 23rd inst. [September], at 12:30 o'clock, Mr. Francis Birdsall, one of those staunch old pioneers whose names will ever be connected in the history-making of East Peterborough, answered the final summons and passed to be with His Maker. His death was not unexpected for he had been in serious condition for some time past, the result of paralytic seizures, the first of which occurred in the beginning of May, followed by another ten days later and a third the beginning of last week which resulted in his death.

Although gone, his life remains written upon the pages of events of this district. He was one who gave much of his time in the support of civic affairs and his public spiritedness and executive ability was recognized by his fellows who chose him to carry out the responsibilities of the leading offices of their organizations. This he did in a manner truly admirable, his interest never lagged, he was always on the spot when called to meet; and in an open, perhaps blunt way of expression, gave praise where it was deserved, or fearlessly spoke his mind in disapproval according to his thought. Other traits, as integrity, are hardly necessary to mention, else the deceased could not have commanded the respect he did.

The late Mr. Birdsall was born on the family homestead on the shore of Rice Lake in 1838, and had lived there all his life, inheriting the farm originally secured by his father, Lieut.-Col. Richard Birdsall, by government grant, at an early day, consisting of about fourteen hundred acres in Asphodel and Otonabee Townships. His father, just mentioned, came from Yorkshire to Canada in 1817, settling in Asphodel. He was a Provincial Land Surveyor and surveyed the Townships of Otonabee and Asphodel; he

also laid out the Town of Peterborough. He was first Reeve of Asphodel, and Agent for the Canada Company, and sold for them large tracts of land in this locality. Francis' brother, Richard E., who died in 1877, was also a prominent man in affairs and was thrice Warden of the County, Reeve of the Township, etc.

Of equal prominence has the subject of this sketch been. In 1866, when the East Peterborough Agricultural Society was incorporated, Francis Birdsall was elected President, which position, with the exception of one year, he held until his death, eagerly watching the Society and its exhibition at Norwood grow to the now substantial position it occupies among the first fairs of the province. He has also been President of East Peterboro' Farmers' Institute since its inception twenty-five years ago. In addition he has been Reeve of Asphodel and School trustee for forty years. In politics he was a Conservative and for years President of East Peterborough Conservative Association and latterly Honorary President. In religion he was of the Church of England, and a member of St. Michael's church, Westwood. He was married in 1859 to Amanda E. Birdsall, of Toronto Township, Peel County, who survives him together with one son Col. R.E. Birdsall; also two grandchildren, one of whom is Captain Everett Birdsall now with the Canadian overseas forces in England, and Miss Ruth Birdsall at home; also one sister, Mrs. Huycke of Cobourg.

The funeral took place on Saturday afternoon to St. Michael's church, Westwood, where service was held, the remains afterwards being interred in the church cemetery. A large number of friends assembled to pay respect to the memory of the departed. The extremely low temperature, however, prevented a great many other old acquaintances from a distance attending.

1914

DR. BRENNAN DIES IN SOUTH AFRICA

Dr. Fred H. Brennan, a former resident of Norwood, and son of Mrs. A. Brennan of Brooklyn, N.Y., died recently in

South Africa where he had been residing for a number of years. A press report from "*The Tidings*" of Los Angeles, California, of which publication, Rev. Albert Hurley, son of Mrs. T. Hurley, Peterboro, is sub-editor, says: "Dr. Fred H. Brennan, pioneer of the Rand goldfields and member of the Irish Brigade during the Boer War, died recently at Johannesburg and was buried with military honours from the cathedral. With athletic instinct he introduced baseball into South Africa. As a fervent Catholic possessing cultural diplomacy, he did much to break the Boer bigotry against the Church. He was born in 1861 at Hastings, Ontario, and graduated in medicine from Trinity College, Toronto.

Dr. Brennan's old Norwood friends will regret to learn of his demise and will join in extending sympathy to his family. The late Mr. A. Breault of Norwood was a friend[?] of the deceased.

1914

PIONEER RESIDENT PASSES

John Barrens, Last Member of The Barrens Family Dies In His 83rd Year

The death of John Barrens occurred Monday in Douro Township, the last surviving member of the Barrens family; one of the first pioneer families of this district. Deceased, who had attained the ripe old age of 82 years and 3 months, passed away at the home of his nephew, Mr. James White, with whom he had resided for several years past.

The late Mr. Barrens, who was a man of estimable character, was born in Ireland, and came to Canada with his parents when a six-month old infant. His parents settled in Otonabee Township on Lot 30, Concession 1. There Mr. Barrens resided for over seventy years until 1919 when he moved to the farm where he died. Deceased was unmarried and the last member of his family, three sisters and one brother having predeceased him a number of years ago, viz:- Mrs. Richard Girvin of Norwood, Mrs. Richard White of Bobcaygeon, Miss Maggie Barrens and Mr. Richard Barrens of Otonabee.

The late Mr. Barrens was a member of the Westwood Presbyterian Church for many years and later of the United Church. The funeral took place yesterday (Wednesday) from his late residence, Lot 2, Concession 1, Douro; his pastor, Rev. S.H. Moyer, conducting the service. Interment was made in Westwood cemetery.

1919

BIRDSALL-KENT WEDDING

A pretty wedding was solemnized in St. George's Cathedral, Kingston, yesterday morning, when the Bishop of Ontario united in marriage Ethel, third daughter of Lt.-Col. and Mrs. R.E. Kent, to Lt.-Col. F.E. Birdsall, Commander of the Hutments at Barriefield. The bride, who was gowned in white Charmeuse satin trimmed with lace and pearls, was attended by Miss Bessie Benjamin of Yarker, who was attired in a shepherd costume of pink Georgette. Major Clyde Scott was best man, and the ushers

were: Major Grier, Capt. Huycke, Capt. Kenneth Taylor, and Mr. Jack Smythe, Lieut. At the conclusion of the ceremony, the bridal party went to the home of the bride's parents, where a reception was held, after which Col. and Mrs. Birdsall left on a motor trip.

1925

MATTHEW BRACKENRIDGE CALLED BY DEATH

Prominent Westwood Citizen Suddenly Expires While at His Work.

Death came with alarming suddenness at 10:30 o'clock Monday morning, February 8th, to Matthew Brackenridge, son of the late John Brackenridge, while at his daily work in Westwood. The deceased had been in his usual health, except for a heavy cold, up to the time of his death and had never complained of anything which might forewarn anyone of his sudden demise. Had he lived till July 4th, next, he would have reached his 70th birthday, having been born in Asphodel in the year 1856 and was a life-long resident of the same township.

As a citizen in the community, he was one of the most highly respected. In religion he was a member of the United Church, and in politics a staunch Conservative. He belonged to the Independent Order of Foresters and was a member of the Masonic Order. Deceased was also a veteran of the North West Rebellion of 1885 serving under Col. Williams.

In 1888, he married Harriet Emerson who predeceased him 10 years ago.

He leaves to mourn his loss, seven brothers and four sisters: John of Iowa, Thos., David and William of Westwood, Norman of Cavan, James of Edmonton, Hugh of Vancouver, and Marion, Agnes and Mrs. Thompson of Westwood, and Margaret of Millbrook; also two sons and one daughter, Gordon of Saskatchewan, Charles and Janet at home.

The funeral services will be held from the family residence, Westwood, at 2:30 p.m., Thursday February 11th, conducted by Rev. John Archibald of Keene.

Interment will take place in Westwood cemetery.

The Register joins a wide circle of friends in extending sympathy to the sorrowing family in their sudden and deep bereavement.

1933

MRS. BIRDSALL, AGED 97, DEAD / Peterborough's Oldest Resident, Mrs. Birdsall, Passes Away. / PIONEER FAMILY.

Mrs. Charlotte M. Birdsall, oldest resident of Peterborough City and County, died Saturday at her home, 166 Edinburgh Street, after a long illness, in her 98th year.

Mrs. Birdsall was a member of one of Peterborough's best-known families, being of English and U.E. Loyalist stock. She was born in Meadowvale, Toronto Township, on June 6th, 1836, the daughter of the late Colonel William Birdsall and Rachael Robinette.

In 1862, she married her cousin, the late Richard E. Birdsall, C.E., of Asphodel Township. Until the death of her husband in 1877, she resided near Birdsall's Station. Later, she

took up residence in this city, where she has lived in more or less retirement since.

Mrs. Birdsall had wide interests in the city and county, being a large owner of property in the city's business district. Her uncle, the late Colonel Richard Birdsall, P.S.L., made the first survey of Peterborough County and City.

Although living for years in quiet seclusion, Mrs. Birdsall had done much to forward the city's progress and much charitable work that was never announced publicly. In religion she was an Anglican and in politics, a staunch Conservative.

An 1863 John Strachan Letter

The Elmir Brown family papers also contained the following interesting letter from The Right Rev John Strachan, Bishop of the Anglican Diocese of Toronto. In Anglican practice, the Bishop signs with his Christian name and the name of his diocese. We were able to confirm that the Rev. Charles E. Thompson and Mr. Greenham were clergy attached to the Diocese of Niagara. However, the letter is rich in cross-references and will reward some historical research. Notice that there are references to the American Civil War, which raged from 1861-1865. There must be an interesting story unfolding in Cobourg. Notice that the letter went from Toronto to Elora next day. Editor.

Letter from Bishop John Strachan to the Rev Charles E. Thompson, of St. John's Elora
Trent Valley Archives, F 314 Brown Family

[Endorsement] Bishop of Toronto, / Recd Apr 7th/63
Toronto 6 April 1863

Revd Dear Sir,
I thank you for your letter of the 28 ult.

Colonel Robert E. Birdsall, of Otonabee Township, is a nephew of the late Mrs. Birdsall.

The funeral will be held from St. Johns Anglican Church at 2 o'clock today, with Ven. Archdeacon R.C. Blgrave, D.D., officiating. Interment will be in Westwood Cemetery, Asphodel Township.

These clippings are a sample of treasured items from the Brackenridge scrapbook at the Trent Valley Archives. The Brackenridges and Birdsalls were ancestors of Mrs Stan (Berta) McBride.

I hope Mr Greenham will be well prepared & appear on the day appointed, have his Si quis acta Testimonials &c in due form & afterward acquit himself as we all wish him –

The Liquis is to be read in Church where the Candidate resides, -- known or official, but the Archdeacon promised to give all the details, which he will be glad to do, if you will ask him for I myself remember nothing more.

Mr Greenham will, I trust be much on his guard for to face such a congregation as that at Cobourg at once, requires some nerves, and a conscious preparation.

I am glad to find that you are stronger than you have formerly been – I wish the Church were more able to satisfy her Clergy with better provision than at present – but we hope that peace will soon return – and then we may with reason expect better times. Give my kind respects to my Friend Mr Geddes, & Mrs Geddes – I hope Mrs Thompson & the Children are in good health & beg my kind remembrance

I remain
Revd & Dear Sir

The Rev Chas E. Thompson Yours truly
Elora John Toronto

Frances Stewart's "Our Forest Home"

The amazing Frances Stewart was the woman behind the successes of Thomas A. Stewart. Still, we would know very little about her except for two historical accidents. She wrote letters sharing her reactions and observations more completely than she did with her husband. Secondly, some of her letters were saved by her most important correspondents.

Her letters were gathered by E. S. [Eleanor Stewart] Dunlop, who lived at Malone, the house on Dunlop Street near the Rotary Greenway Trail. The first edition of *Our Forest Home* was published in 1889; the second, and larger, edition was published in 1902. The second edition was compiled by Frances Browne, a niece of Frances

Elwood H. Jones
Stewart, but the book treats Stewart as the author. One of her correspondents, Harriet Beaufort, thought as early as 1833 that the letters deserved to be gathered and published. She also thought the letters should be published without commentary about Frances Stewart's life. Dunlop gathered Frances' journal and letters from family members in Canada and Ireland with a view to publishing the letters for members of the family. However, it soon was apparent that the letters had wider interest because they often reflected on the public life of Peterborough.

The first edition acknowledged the support of Arnold Haultain, who had spent some years in Peterborough. His father, Major-General Francis Haultain, retired to Peterborough

in 1875 and the family lived at a house on Stewart Street just north of Charlotte Street. Arnold Haultain was the secretary to Goldwin Smith, Canada's reigning intellectual during Victorian times, and knew the community of Toronto publishers very well. Interestingly, the second edition was published by the Montreal Gazette, which was run by Richard White, who with his brother Thomas White, ran the Peterborough Review in the 1860s, before extending their journalistic reach to the Hamilton Spectator and the Montreal Gazette.

The letters gathered by Eleanor Dunlop, together with a few others, were treasured by family members, and the Shearmans in 1978 donated the letters to the Trent University Archives; other parts of the Stewart fonds were received in 1974 and across the 1990s. The Shearmans had shared the letters with Joyce Lewis who wrote about Frances Stewart, most notably in an occasional paper for the Peterborough Historical Society. I met the Shearmans at the time as well for I had been working on the history of St. John's Church (published in 1976) with Joyce Lewis and Anne Heideman and others. Joyce Lewis hoped to publish the Stewart letters for she discovered that Eleanor Dunlop had broken most of the rules for editing literary papers. However, the project proved quite difficult as many of the letters were undated, and those receiving the letters were not always known.

The history of Auburn, all the area north of Parkhill halfway to Trent University, was tied to the Stewarts and the Reids. The drumlin at the Peterborough Golf and Country Club was known as Auburn Hill, the Stewart home was called Auburn, and the Auburn Woollen Mills, which began in 1863, were on Stewart property, and their dam on the Otonabee River was also known as Auburn. The industrial village that grew up around the mill was annexed by the Town of Peterborough in 1872, and efforts to build bridges in that part of the river were undertaken more seriously.

Aoki's book is titled *Revisiting "Our Forest Home: the immigrant letters of Frances Stewart*. The Stewarts saw themselves as settlers, rather than as immigrants. Settlers would have been more appropriate since the letters cover a half-century from 1822 to 1872. As well, the close identification with Ireland remained lifelong, and one might argue that Frances Stewart is better described as an emigrant. Eleanor Dunlop saw Frances as a settler. Because the British government was in charge both in Canada and in Ireland, the identity was British; they might be settled in a more remote place, but they did not see themselves as immigrants. Even the 1847 Famine Migration uses the word "migrant" which suggests moving within the country. Those going to the United States in the 1820s might see themselves as immigrants, but this was British soil.

Even in his letter to Basil Hall, to which Aoki draws attention, Thomas A. Stewart does not say they "emigrated out of duty to their children." Rather, he says "yet we consider the step we took in coming here was that of duty to our children." All the references in this quite long letter,

which was intended to give insight and detail to Basil Hall, Peterborough's first tourist was more public than private, is to settlers, albeit in remote areas. Hall concluded that no one should come to this area unless they were really "penurious." This reflected the upper class attitude that the old country was preferable. Generally, the very rich and the very poor did not emigrate.



Looking closely at one letter is one way to see the difference between the old version of *Our Forest Home* and the new version. One of my favourite letters is one Frances Stewart wrote May 5, 1847 to her aunt, Mrs. Waller, in Allentown, Ireland. It runs to about 2400 words, but when edited by Eleanor Dunlop, Frances' daughter, the letter ran to about one-half that length. In the first half of the letter, Dunlop has cut the length by one-third; in the last half she leaves out large chunks, and prints less than one-third of the letter. However, after that she adds observations on 1847 events, none of which appeared in the letter. It is striking that only 100 letters written by Frances Stewart over half a century have survived. Three times

as many incoming letters have survived; it is the nature of archival collections to contain the letters received. Before the letterpress book, or Thomas Jefferson's ingenious second pen writing in unison with the first pen, or carbon paper, copies of the letters sent were rarely kept unless a copyist was employed, in government or business offices and the homes of the very wealthy, to write copies of the outgoing letters. Aoki's book only contains letters or journal entries written by Frances Stewart; Our Forest Home carried short versions of letters written by other people. Also, the Dunlop version of Our Forest Home contains several letters that do not appear in Aoki's version. Evidently, several letters disappeared in the eighty years before the letters were deposited in the Trent University Archives.

The interesting 1847 letter is very representative of Frances Stewart's approach to letter-writing. She begins by commenting on the beginnings of what we now know as the Great Irish famine of 1847. She then considers whether her acquaintances would be better off in Ireland or in Upper Canada. She considers that home, as she called the British Isles, offered advantages of diversity and intellectual and scientific cultural opportunities. While they might consider "here" to be a "desolate wilderness" she concludes that she could not be happier anywhere else. She considers the advantages of acquaintances, plenty of food, and the variety of work. Even poor crops or long winters will right themselves. When she complains of losing the bridge on Hunter Street to the spring floods on the Otonabee she rests assured that something will be done to accommodate the general public. She discusses different people within the Stewart family, and some of the problems they faced. Dr. Hutchison is dying.

Clearly, there are many problems with living in Canada, but the news was generally pleasant. Eleanor Dunlop adds some observations about her father helping to raise funds to help the Irish in the famine migration, and also about the conditions at the temporary hospital that ministered to the sick migrants, and the risk of exposure that led to the death of her father and Dr. Hutchison.

On the letters that have survived, Jodi Aoki has done a fine transcription. But the new book does not seem definitive. Dunlop's version of *Our Forest Home*, for all its faults, remains an historic record, some 120 years old, of how a daughter made sense of her mother's life by working around the letters her mother wrote, and those she saved.

The image of Frances Stewart that emerges in Jodi Aoki's reading of the letters is that of a woman defending her family, and forever coping with the hardships of living in an area that was not central to the political power of the province. However, I think she underestimates the ways in which Thomas A. Stewart was linked to the power structure of the province, by being a Member of the Legislative Council. Moreover, Peterborough did get provincial support for building its infrastructure. More important, all the settlers that accompanied Peter Robinson were given

money and supplies that were spent and used in this region. It is not enough to know what Frances Stewart thought.

The dynamics of the letters of Frances Stewart are tied to family strategies for surviving and for believing that decisions made were generally good. But the letters also reveal the difficulties of aging, of the passing of power from one generation to the next. Her world was not static. For the first thirty years, most of the letters went to Ireland; after that none did.

As Jodi Aoki acknowledges, different people will read the letters differently. The letters tell more about Frances Stewart and her relations with her family. But as noted in the 1847 letter, we can learn more about the local context of the Stewarts when parts of the letters are restored. This is very exciting.

A version of this article appeared in my Historian at Work column in the Peterborough Examiner, 23 July 2011.

PHOTOGRAPH OF FRANCES STEWART

The photograph that appears as the frontispiece to *Our Forest Home* and in *Revisiting Our Forest Home* was apparently taken

Jodi Aoki, ed. *Revisiting "Our Forest Home": the immigrant letters of Frances Stewart* (Toronto, Dundurn, 2011) ISBN 978-1-55488-776-7, Pp 292, The book is being sold at Titles, Chapters, and the Trent University Bookstore.

in 1872, shortly before Frances Stewart died. This is Eleanor Dunlop's observation.

However, the Trent Valley Archives has a carte de visite in the Crawford family albums that may provide clues about the photo. The original photo would have been a tin type, and so the carte de visite was a copy of the 1872 photo probably made in 1888 or 1889 to be used in the new book. The carte de visite was made by Thompson & Sun, a Peterborough photo studio that operated for some thirty years, and was in business both in 1872 and in 1888. Our records show the firm as early as 1856 and still in business in 1896. This was the longest of any photography firm before the Roy Studio.

The photographer of the original tin type was unknown, but now it seems reasonable to assume that it was Robert Thompson & Sun. This was a deliberate double entendre and the logo of Thompson & Sun included a full yellow sun. But the son was a partner in the firm, and Mrs Thompson was also a photographer.

Join us for the volunteer and donor appreciation day 4 pm to 7 pm at Fairview Heritage centre on Carnegie and woodland September 17, 2011

COMPARING ONE FRANCES STEWART LETTER AS TRANSCRIBED IN OUR FOREST HOME AND IN REVISITING "OUR FOREST HOME"

Our Forest Home, 210-215; Reconsidering "Our Forest Home" 142-147

To Mrs Waller, Allenstown, Ireland, 1847, May 5

OFH 1 1847, May 5

[210] *The accounts of the famine in Ireland are most heartrending. What a state that poor place is in. [211] I really fear the whole air of the country will be polluted by the masses of putrefying bodies of animals and decayed vegetables. The pestilence may not be confined to those who have suffered from bad food or no food. I often wish that all I love were out of it and here; but then I begin to recollect how very irksome Canadian life would seem to those who have been accustomed to elegance, ease and refinement; how insupportable it would be to those who have lived in a round of amusements, or enjoyed intellectual or scientific society. What a desolate wilderness it would seem to those who have enjoyed intellectual or scientific society.*

ROFH 1 1847, May 5 Aoki

[142] Our early tea is over. Bessie has gone to her garden for a little while & I will take the quiet time before all the labourers come in for their supper to tell you that last Friday I had the enjoyment of reading letters from several dear friends dated 1 April What dreadful sickness there is now. It seems quite as fatal as the starvation. Oh what a state that poor place is in!! I really fear the whole air of the island of Ireland will be polluted by the masses of putrefying bodies animals & also the rotten vegetables. I fear the pestilence may not be confined to those who have suffered from bad food, or no food, but that the very air they breathe much [must] be loaded with foulness. I sometimes wish all I love there were [143] safe out here. But then I begin to recollect how very irksome a Canadian life would seem to those who have been accustomed to elegance, ease & refinement. How insupportable it would be to those who have lived in a round of amusement or enjoyed intellectual or scientific society.

OFH 2 1847, May 5

[211] *What a desolate wilderness it would seem to those who have enjoyed the privilege of Christian intercourse with the religious part of society at home, for alas, we have but little of that here. When I think of all of these things, I begin to find I am selfish for wishing anyone to come. And yet does it not seem a contradiction to say that positively and truly I am as happy as anybody need wish or expect to be in this world. I will even go further and say that I do think I am much happier than most people I know. In the first place I never have anything to do that is in the least fatiguing, for my dear, kind, thoughtful husband never could bear to see me exert myself and has always endeavoured to save me from the necessity of doing anything that would hurt me. And now my dear good children never allow me to do anything but some*

trifling part of the household department, and needlework or knitting.

ROFH 2 1847, May 5 Aoki

[143] What a desolate wilderness it would seem to those who have enjoyed the privileges of Christian conversation & intercourse with the Religious part of the society at home, for alas! we have but little of that here. When I think of all these things I begin to find that I am selfish in wishing anyone to come here for few of my friends are not too well off at home not to make the change felt in some of the three ways I have mentioned, & yet does it not seem a contradiction to say that positively & truly I am as happy here as anybody need wish or expect to be in this world. I will even go farther & say that I do think I am much happier than most people I know anywhere. In the first place I never have anything to do that is the least fatiguing for my dear kind thoughtful husband never could bear to see me exert myself & has always endeavoured to save me from the necessity of doing anything that could hurt me & now my dear good children never allow me to do anything but some very trifling part of the household department & needlework or knitting. Not many have such thoughtful affectionate husband & children.

OFH 3 1847, May 5

[211] *As for society or amusement, I have lost all relish for parties or anything of that sort. I am never at a loss for variety, for every hour there is so much going forward that the [212] change is constant. As for religious companionship, I have dear Mrs. Fowlis who is a treasure to us all, and occasionally Mr. and Mrs. Roger refresh us delightfully. Then we have your letters and Mrs. Wilson's, etc., besides the books of which we read a portion every day, sometimes very small, but no day passes without some serious or improving reading. So we have everything to make us happy.*

ROFH 3 1847, May 5 Aoki

[143] As for society or amusement I have lost all relish for parties or anything of that sort & I am never at loss for variety for every hour there is so much going forward that there is constant change & movement going on. As for religious companionship I have dear Mrs. Fowlis who is a treasure to us all & occasionally we have Mr. & Mrs. Rogers & they refresh us delightfully. Then we have all your letters & Mrs. Wilsons & some others which give us a fresh supply of interesting matter every month besides all the books of which we read a small portion every day, sometimes very small. But no day passes without some serious or improving reading. So have we not every thing to make us happy?

OFH 4 1847, May 5

[212] *Nothing to do with politics, gossip or fashion, or keeping up appearances, which really in many instances*

causes much trouble and plague. We always attend to being tidily and becomingly dressed, and have a clean, neatly-laid table with a plentiful supply of good wholesome food. We have oatmeal now, which for many years we could not procure, but there are now two good oatmills, one our own property. We have also Indian meal and both are liked. We have a substantial breakfast for the boys as soon after six o'clock as all can be assembled after the horses, cattle, pigs and fowls are attended to.

ROFH 4 1847, May 5 Aoki

[143] & we live so retired that we have nothing to do with politics or Gossip or fashions or keeping up appearances which really in many instances causes much trouble & plague. We always try to dress neatly & to be clean & to have our tables decently & comfortably laid out & generally have a very plentiful supply of plain substantial wholesome food & what more ought we to require. We have now got abundance of oatmeal [144] which for many years we never had at all & till now it was always very difficult to procure. Now there are two good oat mills, one of them on our own property, so we can always have it. We have also plenty of Indian meal & as both are liked, they use Indian Meal porridge for breakfast & the oatmeal for supper. We have very substantial breakfasts as soon after six o'clock as all can be assembled. But as some are attending to horses or cattle or pigs or fowl it is not easy to collect all to a moment.

OFH 5 1847, May 5

[212] *First Mr. Stewart reads a portion of Scripture and prayer; after this the steaming porridge, smiling potatoes, cold meat, eggs, toast, bread and butter and two large jugs of milk, besides the teapot, are placed on the table. All set to work with much energy according to taste or fancy. After this everybody goes to their different enjoyments. B. and K. settle all up. I sit at my reading or knitting for a little while. The routine of work, though simple, is not at all monotonous now. I often wonder how Mr. Stewart can go on keeping all in order as he does in so many departments, thinking of such an extraordinary [213] variety of different matters; but he never slackens nor tires, though he often looks weary and anxious.*

ROFH 5 1847, May 5 Aoki

[144] Then Tom reads a portion of scripture & prayers. After that in come the smoking Sepanne, the nice smiling potatoes, cold meats, Eggs, Toast Bread, butter, 2 large jugs of milk besides the tea pot &c & all set to work with much energy according to their taste or fancy. But they don't waste any time after it is over for all set off to their different employments & Bessie & Kate carry out all the things & settle up the room & I sit at my reading or knitting for a little while. The routine of work tho' simple is not at all monotonous now & sometimes I can't help wondering how Tom can go on as he does keeping all going on in so many different departments & thinking of such an extraordinary variety of different matters but he never slackens or tires tho' he often looks weary & anxious.

OFH 6 1847, May 5

[213] *This is an unusually backward season, everything is some weeks later than it ought to be. The ground was, till lately, covered with deep snow, so that ploughing could not be done in low-lying ground, consequently we shall have but half the quantity of wheat sown that otherwise we would put in; however, we shall have enough for our own use, though none to sell I fear, which is a loss, having been too low a price for any profit last year.*

ROFH 6 1847, May 5 Aoki

[144] This is an unusually backward season and every thing is some weeks later than it ought to be. The ground was so lately covered with deep snow that ploughing could not be done in low ground at all and consequently we shall have but half the quantity of wheat sown which we otherwise w'd have put in. However, we shall have enough for our own use tho' none to sell I fear, which is a loss as it will probably bring a good price next year having been too low in price for any profit last year.

OFH 7 1847, May 5

[213] *This is a lovely day, warm and bright, the birds and insects and everything seem to rejoice. Vegetation and has commenced and is making rapid progress, the lilacs bursting into leaf, the grass is growing green, and fruit trees changing from the stiff wintry gray to the reddish tinge which soon turns to green.*

ROFH 7 1847, May 5 Aoki

[144] Thursday morning – 10 o'clock. Good morning my dearest Aunty. Here is a most lovely day, warm & bright, the birds & insects & everything seeming to rejoice. The vegetation has commenced & is making rapid progress, the lilacs are all bursting into leaf, the grass growing green & the forest trees all changing from the stiff wintry grey to a reddish tinge which will soon change to green.

OFH 8 1847, May 5

[213] *We have had difficulty getting into town for some time back; the bridge was rickety and dangerous all through the winter and at last it gave way to the increasing force of the river which always rises in spring. Off it went one day; fortunately no one was on it. Edward had just crossed and heard it cracking and smashing as he moved off.*

ROFH 8 1847, May 5 Aoki

[144] We have had great difficulty getting into Peterboro for some time past. The bridge was rickety & dangerous all through the winter but at last gave way to the encreasing force of the river which always rises in spring & it was carried off one day. Fortunately no person was on it. [145] Tho' horses were not able to cross it for a long time, yet people used to walk over. Edward Brown had just come over & was not far on this side when he heard it cracking & going off. There are boats for passengers to get across but they are not well manned & the charge is too high. Our boat here is not in good order so we are obliged to borrow one but these

difficulties will soon be over for some means of crossing must be established for the public. Our river has risen unusually high this year & has overflowed the banks to a great distance & has partially injured all the Mill, dams & races so that there is great plague [fears] about having flour but it will soon go down & these injuries will be repaired. My own dear Aunt I think you have been much too generous in your contribution this year for our box commissions. I assure you that I feel it is wrong where you have so many calls on your purse, so very urgent as they are this miserable year but as it is done I must only try to express my thankfulness to you which indeed I cannot find words for. £10 is quite too much but I am sure Harriet will lay it out to the best of her judgement. Pray tell my dear Maria she need not have said one word about her not sending here usual gift. Oh I am glad she did not for I do feel I am a continual tax & drain on your purse & heart my ever dear & kind friends. Mrs. Hay & Dr. Hays sisters & cousins are sending out a box to Anna. They (like you) seem to be always thinking of useful things to send & it is very delightful to find them all so kind to Anna. The good old lady is I find sending out some books too & desired Anna "to choose out one for each of her six brothers & for little Kate." Is not this very great kindness. She writes beautiful advice to Anna, as a mother, & gives her many good hints about early leading little James to know & love the Lord.

I heard from Mrs. Wilson of Maryville that the two Kirkpatrick's had hooping cough very mildly. I hope dear Catherine may not take it. I am not sure whether she ever had it. We shall have another mail in a few days & I hope for good acc'ts of all. Surely we have reason to be thankful for generally having pleasant news of my friends.

OFH 9 1847, May 5

[213] I am happy to say all my children and grandchildren are well. I have just heard that A. and her child were at the other side of the river, but the boat was away, so they could not get across. E. came to see us the other day; her heart seems with us still, though she has a sweet little home. Little M. is growing more and more engaging every day. E. says she has sense beyond her years. Poor Willie has had [214] several attacks of ague; quinine stops it after some preliminary medicine. There is much fever and ague still in the country, which is a great trouble. Many are prevented attending to their spring work which is a serious loss.

ROFH 9 1847, May 5 Aoki

[145] I am happy to say all my dear children & grandchildren in both families are well. I have just heard that Anna & the children & the little maid were at the opposite side yesterday trying to get over to us but there was no boat. Little Fanny has just got over the weaning most easily & [146] prosperously without any trouble or ever [even] being taken from her Mama except for a few nights when she slept with the maid. She is a most sweet dispositioned gentle infant. She has got two teeth. I was amused at your sending the old linen for Baby purposes. Indeed I believe it will all come into

requisition towards the end of the year for I am sure poor Anna is in that way & I suspect Ellen is beginning also. They are rather hasty I think but I hope the Lord sends them for blessings as mine are to me. Ellen walked over to see us the day before yesterday. Poor dear her heart seems with us still tho' she has every comfort she can require & the best of husbands & she thinks no one like him. She is very thin but that does not signify. Little Mary is growing more engaging every day & Ellen says "has sense beyond her age!! She thinks & reasons in her mind." We have all had colds. I have had my usual tedious cough & found my [] lozenges a great comfort. Poor Willy has had several attacks of ague but we generally stop it with Quinine, first giving Calomel & sometimes an Emetic. He looks very thin & washy & is very weak. He has just had a pretty smart attack & it disheartens him not to be able to do his share of the work now when so much is to be done & the season so far advanced. They are sowing a great deal of oats & pease & turnips. We will plant a couple acres of potatoes as we have good seed but expect next time will be worse than the last. Will you thank Aunt Sutton for her kind letter & for all her kindness about everything on money matters. Oh she is very very kind to us. I wrote a fortnight ago in a letter Bessie wrote to Mary Rothwell so I will not write to anyone but you dear Aunt.

A few lines I must write to Harriet if you have the goodness to send them on to her. Poor dear she wrote to me but I fear it must have hurt her greatly. There is still a great deal of sickness in the country here, principally ague & bilious fever. All who had it in Autumn have it again now & many people are kept from attending to their Spring work which is a serious loss here where all depends on industry.

We find the supply of Quinine most useful & will probably require a small supply again during the summer. Little Flora Macdougall has got ague again & old Mrs. Reid & James Reid which is a great loss as he is the head worker there. He is terribly reduced.

OFH 10 1847, May 5

[214] Poor Dr. Hutchison has had another attack of apoplexy, his life hangs by a thread.

ROFH 10 1847, May 5 Aoki

[146] Poor Dr. Hutchison has had another bad attack of apoplexy. I have not heard for some days but [147] his life hangs by a cobweb & Dr. Hay attends him. I am sorry poor Mrs. Blakeney's recovery is not so rapid as was at first hoped but at her age it could hardly be expected. Tell me how all the Blakeney's & [Battersbys] out here are going on. We never hear of them at all. They are a long way from us & many like that west country best. Thank you dear Aunt for sending me those nice Sermons. I suppose the Box is now near starting. Poor Harriet must have employed someone to do it for her. I hope she may not have hurt herself for my sake. I am glad she has that nice useful Nanny. My paper says stop & so I must. Give loves in loads to all my dear people beginning at home & extending by Athboy to Rockfield & everywhere. Every our own fond F. Stewart & grateful child...

OFH 11 1847, May 5 addenda by E. S. Dunlop
 [214] This was a remarkable year in many respects, affecting both town and county; incidents of many kinds marked it advance. The famine in Ireland caused a deep feeling of sympathy for the poor people there. My father took an active part in influencing his friends in Peterboro' and the neighbourhood to raise money to send home for their countrymen. In February and March the leading citizens came forward willingly in the good cause and the sum of £364 was collected. The railroad from Port Hope was chartered and a good deal talked about. Many people were prejudiced against railways in those days and thought our old roads were best, or at least good enough.

A large immigration from Ireland this year, of many poor people almost in a state of starvation and bringing with them a malignant type of typhoid fever, was the cause of much anxiety and trouble. A temporary hospital was established on the Little Lake, then a good distance from the inhabited part of the town and those who were sick were isolated till restored. My father did all he could for their condition with the help of the people of the town, but owing to his anxious disposition signs of debility began to show themselves in him early in summer. He had [215] much care and anxiety too for his sister, Mrs. Fowles, whose declining state plainly showed she would not be long with them. His daily walk was from Auburn to the Park Cottage, (the home he had given to her and her widowed daughter and two children "for as long as they required it,") where they held sweet converse.

News Views and Reviews



MOONRAKERS BOOK LAUNCH WAS GREAT SUCCESS

Brooke Broadbent, *Moonrakers at Peace and War* (Ottawa, 2011) ISBN 978-1-55323-576-7 Pp xvi, 172, \$20

There was a nice crowd at Titles Bookstore for the moonlaunch of the Moonrakers book. After a brief introduction, Brooke told of some of the research adventures that lay behind his decision to write a book about early settlers from Wiltshire, an English county sometimes famed as the home of Moonrakers. Many of the people in the audience were also descendants of the Moonrakers. One visitor came with a delightful photo album and Brooke plans to include some of the photos in later printings of the book.

When asked about how easily he was able to identify individuals in his pictures, Brooke admitted there were no

magic answers. However, he has found it is possible when working with a family tree and with reasonable estimates of the dates of the pictures. It is better when the descendant sharing the picture has some suggestions. Of course nothing is better than when someone (whom we always hope was knowledgeable) has written on the back. While it is good to identify pictures when you encounter them, be careful to use writing implements that will not mar the photo either on the front or the back.

Brooke Broadbent has crafted several of his stories as representative of the experience of many people. People living in tough times had to cope with near disasters frequently. When one of his ancestors was in jail for being poor, Brooke wondered whether such stories were common, or if they helped to define the society in which his ancestor lived. Such stories, and how Brooke thinks his way through them, can be quite helpful to other family historians. The context in which our ancestors lived is as helpful as specific details about what they did.

This book is available in Titles and Trent Valley Archives and elsewhere. The book was reviewed in our last issue.

Ralph Heintzman, ed., *Tom Symons: A Canadian Life* (Ottawa, University of Ottawa Press, 2011) ISBN 978-0-7766-3043-4 Pp 466 \$36.95

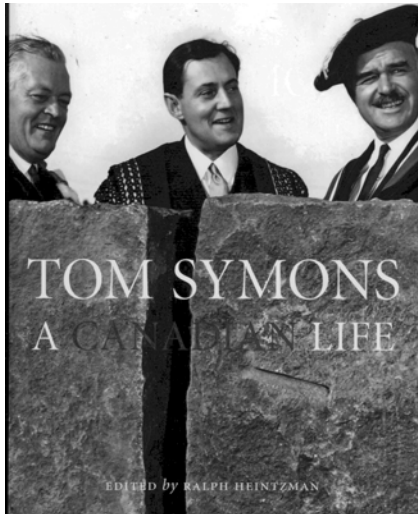
Tom Symons emerges as somehow symbolic of the Canadian spirit for the last fifty years, even though he was unlike any Canadian we know. He was the founder of Trent University, and a driving force behind the defining characteristics of its architecture, of residential colleges, of small group teaching, and a collegial community in which professors, students and administrators had shared visions. Denis Smith, a member of the inner group at the founding, spoke cleverly of the way these ideas worked in the early 1960s. Without Symons, the university would not have had the same sense of civility and concern for others. As well, the

university might not have had the leavening of a university based on small residential colleges. Symons was effective at making his views known in Toronto, by politicians and public servants.

I read the book, knew many of the authors, and attended a celebratory conference inspired by the book. Through it all, my impressions were strengthened. Symons applied what he learned in Peterborough to the wider world.

This was best reflected in Tom McMillan's discussion of Tom Symons' work with Robert Stanfield from 1968 to the mid-1970s. It was unusual for a political party to look outside politics to get someone to be in charge of policy initiatives. Stanfield was seeking ways to make the Progressive Conservative party appealing to academics and thinking people. Trent University was accepted as Canada's outstanding small university. Symons, for his part, was committed to public service, and had shown an ability to develop

university policies in the context of public policies which Symons had helped amend. His partnership with Stanfield was amazingly effective. Symons was the patient grey eminence for the Priorities for



Canada Conference in 1969, and then headed the Policy Coordinating Committee. Symons found various ways for members of the political party to discuss policy issues. The party emerged from its populist phase under Diefenbaker with fresh credibility, nearly winning a minority government in 1972 and only losing in 1974 because of Liberal duplicity on wage controls. McMillan felt that the Symons and Stanfield partnership "elevated the political culture of the land as few other Canadians have ever done." The key was not so much the policies as the process. Following the 1969 Niagara Conference, Symons' committee held dozens of meetings, generated countless position papers, recruited over 500 experts, and developed 260 resolutions for the 1971 annual meeting. All delegates had packages loaded with information long before the discussions occurred. It was a tour de force, which the convention recognized.

The process may be the key to understanding Symons. His legendary Canadian Studies Commission and the recent commission studying the future of the Trent Severn Waterway gathered briefs, produced reports, revised

reports, made recommendations and found ways all along to be open and accessible.

This echoed aspects of how Trent University came to Peterborough. Reg Faryon wrote his famous letter in 1957 suggesting Peterborough should have a college. Robertson Davies hoped for a real university. The local committee met discouragement in Queen's Park until they found three advisors from Queen's, Toronto and Western. As Denis Smith observed, Symons orchestrated planning. He developed policies for a university meeting his vision, but he also carried support at the provincial level, among leaders and labour unions in Peterborough, and created wider sympathy for the new Trent University.

Tom Symons seemed to be everywhere that mattered as Canadians for half a century hammered out policies related to universities, education, heritage, Canadian Studies, Native Studies, and to culture. Trent was an exciting place where lots was happening. I thrived in its classes, colleges and architecture; I loved its committees and its discussions. I loved its peerless setting across a beautiful river, at the base of a drumlin on one side and a prehistoric river valley on the other. Tom Symons; greatest achievement was founding Trent University. For Symons, it was the key to all that followed. His was a remarkable life that impacted on some of us more than others.

Staff Inspector Robert Vernon Lewis, *A Peterborough Cop and His Guardian Angel* (Peterborough 2011) ISBN 978-0-9868899-0-5 Pp 346,

Staff Inspector Bob Lewis had an interesting police career. Fortunately he save notes from his experiences and reconstructed a story of how he and policing changed over nearly a half century from the 1950s until he retired in 1991. Most of his career, which began in Toronto, was in Peterborough.

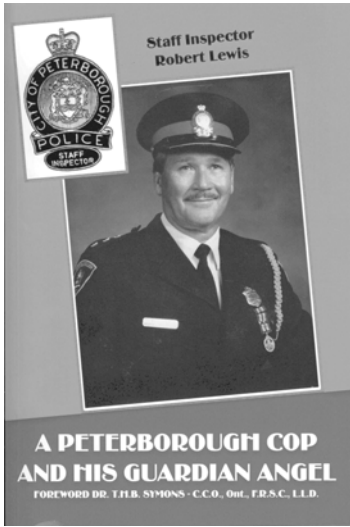
There were some dramatic events. He casts fresh light on the murder of Murray Green at the Grand Hotel (now Sin City). He shares insights of a running battle with the police chief. Sometimes he seems to be an outsider; at other times, he is well-informed.

However, the archivist in me thinks the book would have been impossible without his own notebooks. Most stories would be more rounded if the police had an archives that was readily accessible. There are many places that have good police archives, but Peterborough is not one of those places. I think it is because the police believe they have much to hide, or else a culture of secrecy is second-nature.

Lewis came to Peterborough shortly after the 1957 provincial inquiry into the running of the local police force. I imagined that when they cleaned the Augean stables there would be fresh opportunities for police, and that Lewis came here because of that. Apparently not. He liked Peterborough because he had become familiar with it while spending fishing holidays in the Kawarthas. There are many stories that seem

shaded by the events of 1957, I wonder how the implications will get explored.

The book has lots of interesting stories. Not long after arriving he has a long-running duel with the police chief about parking. Lewis suggests that he gets some close attention because he has recently come from Toronto. The police chief has come from the OPP and that raised other dynamics. The book gives insights into the ways that police do their business. The most important case for him was the 1972 murder of Murray Green at the botched Grand Hotel robbery. A useful addition to books about Peterborough for it fills a void that is usually very hard to research, especially in the absence of real, accessible police archives.



This book is available at Titles.

British Home Child Day Receives Royal Assent

Ivy Sucee Founder and President, Hazelbrae Barnardo Home Memorial Group

On May 19th five members of the Hazelbrae Barnardo Home Memorial Group were in attendance in the Legislature of Ontario at Queen’s Park for the second and third reading of Bill 185 brought to the floor by MPP Jim Brownell. It was passed unanimously by the Conservatives, New Democratic and Liberal parties that September 28th be known as Ontario British Home Child Day. All members crossed the floor to congratulate Jim on the passing of this bill that most said was long overdue. The co-sponsors of the Bill were MPP Cheri Di Novo Parkdale-Highpark and MPP Steve Clark Leeds -Grenville.

An act to proclaim September 28th as British Home Child Day received Royal Assent on June 1st by the Chief Justice of the Province of Ontario the Honourable Mr. Justice Warren K. Winkler in the Lieutenant-Governors suite Queen’s Park. By signing his name to this bill, September 28th will now officially be known and celebrated as British Home Child Day in Ontario.

“May we long remember and honor the courage, strength and determination of our British Home children ancestors and celebrate their wonderful legacies said Jim Brownell MPP for Stormont, Dundas South, and Glengarry.

Peterborough, which had the largest of all the Barnardo Homes in Canada, views this bill to have a significant meaning to our local Hazelbrae family of over 8,000 children.

Every year on 28 September 28 we can expect all across Ontario, as well as here in Peterborough, that there will be special events to recognize these children whose descendants now number 12% of our population.

The induction of new honourees on the **Pathway of Fame**



takes place 10 September 2011 at 10 a.m. at Showplace Performance Place on George Street. The general public is welcome to this special event, free admission. As Trent Valley Archives is the archival home of the Pathway of Fame, it would be special if several of our members could attend. Mayor Daryl Bennett is the special speaker. Dan Bronson is the special entertainer before the ceremony. Elwood Jones and Martha Kidd are previous inductees. This year’s inductees include Randy Read and Michael Peterman.

Trent Valley Archives is selling “Footprints of Life” which features thumbnail portraits of all past honourees on the Pathway of Fame as well as more detailed biographies of the current nominees. The booklet sells for \$5 and is available from the Trent Valley Archives bookshelf.

The beginning of the **bicentennial of the War of 1812**, which spread over to 1814, is only months away. We have heard of different local initiatives, but so far the Trent Valley Archives has not decided the best way to celebrate. The war preceded European settlement in the Kawartha, but Hiawatha Indians fought along side the Mohawks at Stony Creek and other battles. As well, there is a direct connection with Sir Isaac Brock. Some of our early settlers had experience in the Napoleonic Wars which captured most of Europe’s attentions. If your family has links to the era of the War of 1812, let us know what you are doing to mark the fact.



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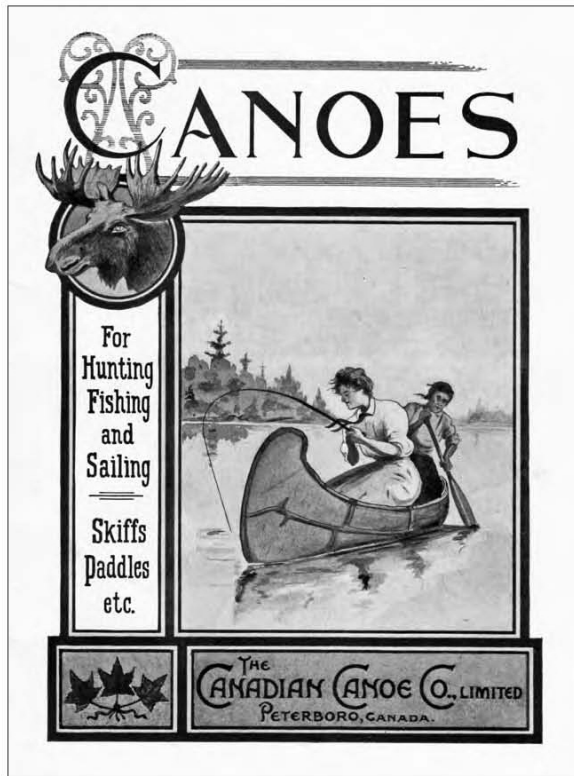
Doors Open 2011: a sporting look

From early times to the present, Peterborough's sportsmen and fans found sanctuary at the east end of the Hunter Street bridge. There was the cricket ground and the riverside park. The Peterborough Amateur Athletic Association (PAAA) was there by 1883. The cricket field became a residential street in 1903, but the nearby lawn bowling green lasted to 1928. After the building of the concrete bridge, the former industrial park became recreational, and included more baseball and the tennis club, and later the city's only outdoor swimming pool. The area has changed dramatically, but sports is still spoken here. Tour will be led by historian Elwood Jones of the Trent Valley Archives, September 24 and 25.

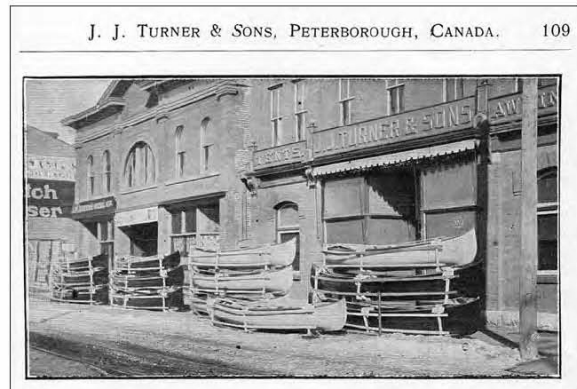
There are several sites and tours being arranged for the two days of Doors Open 2011. For details see http://www.doorsopenontario.on.ca/userfiles/HTML/nts_1_13049_1.html

Ken Brown has been working on the history of canoes in Peterborough for many years, and the book is now being prepared for fall release. This is really good news for those of us who have followed this project over the years. Ken's research covers all the bases and this will be a great book.

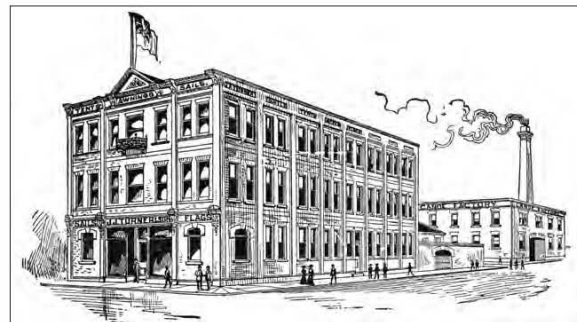
The Trent Valley Archives has just received a donation of papers related to J. J. Turner and Sons. One of the delightful items was a 1933 catalogue for the company and it included several pages promoting canoes. Cleverly, the emphasis was on Peterborough as the home of the world's best canoes, but the catalogue implied that Turner was making canoes. Ken sent this page from the planning for his new book which showed the connection was made even earlier. The top picture on the right shows canoes ready for shipping along George Street in front of the Grand Opera and the Turner factory. The bottom picture shows the Turner factory with the Peterborough Canoe factory on Water Street seeming to be part of the Turner factory. This is an excellent example of the commercial artist in Edwardian times.



The covers of company catalogues were typically decorated with a striking camping, paddling, or boating image. Shown above is the catalogue cover from 1908, Covers from approximately 1940, and from the early 1950s are on page...



Harry Saffren



Harry Saffren

These images from the J. J. Turner Company catalogue do nothing to discourage customers from believing that Turners made their own canoes. The "Canoe Factory" next door to the Turner building was, in fact, that of the PCC. The canoes the Turners advertised were made either there or in Fredericton, and Turner paddles came from H.B. Rye who operated a paddle-making operation at his "Oronabee Boat House" at the south end of Peterborough.

CANADIAN CANOE COMPANY

The Honourable Mr. Justice F. Bruce Fitzpatrick



One of our most respected volunteers has been named to the bench. Effective late June Bruce Fitzpatrick was appointed judge of the Superior Court of Justice of Ontario in Thunder Bay. Bruce has had a distinguished career in litigation, and has been in Peterborough for 18 years since he was one of the founders of the Lockington, Lawless and Fitzpatrick law firm, now known as LLF Lawyers. Bruce has been known locally as one of the Three Loonies who for ten years raised money every December for the Kawartha Food Share. His connection with the Trent Valley Archives is equally long, but he has been best-known for his association with several signature historical walks over the past six years. Most of the walks have been based on the historical research and writing of our own Diane Robnik but Bruce defined the persona and story lines with a deft sense of the audience, a little bit of the audacious, a large chunk of humour, costume and props. It was classical street theatre.

Bruce was a great advocate of the need to show our wares. People need to be aware of the valuable assets that lie on the shelves of the Trent Valley Archives. Here, he is pictured performing at one of our Christmas shows. He helped us to appreciate what was special about Trent Valley Archives and its service to the community. For that we will be grateful.

He is now one of nine Superior Court Judges in the North West Region based in Thunder Bay, Ontario. His swearing in ceremony will be on August 4.

The Trent Valley Archives had a special farewell for Bruce. Wally Macht read a cute poem about another judge's first day in robes. Elwood Jones presented the inaugural Keith Dinsdale Outstanding Volunteer award to Bruce Fitzpatrick. Pauline Harder wished him the best of luck and gave him several gifts on behalf of all of us. Andre Dorfman presented him with a top hat that Bruce has often worn while portraying George A. Cox. Susan Kyle had some witty Latin words of wisdom to share. It was a special occasion, and we hope he will not soon forget us.

The wider community had a special farewell for Bruce at Holiday Inn. There were several speeches and a nine minute power point showing Bruce in several roles. After being upstaged by his son, Bruce spoke of his Peterborough experiences: he got to do in Peterborough everything he ever dreamed doing. In community work, he never did anything alone for he always depended on the wisdom, talent or support of others. Bruce was interviewed on KRUZ radio and had kind words for his association with Trent Valley Archives.

We will follow Bruce's career with great interest, and hope that we will see him at future special events.

Fairmiles and Mosquitos

*Gordon Young,
Lakefield Heritage Research*

In response to Alan Brunger's request for information about the "Fairmile boat" Gord Young of the Lakefield Heritage Research prepared the following piece.



Your
"Q-Boats"
were
actually
"Fairmile
Boats".
My father
worked at
Greavette
[aka:
Gray-vet]

as a youngster, and, later had their contract when the "Fairmiles" were being built. The "Farmile boat" was a British take-off of the "Higgins PT Boat". The name reportedly came when Sir William Stephenson met my uncle Dick at Boeckh Brush, in Gravenhurst]. Uncle Dick said, "you sure have come a fair mile to get this project going". To avoid patent arguments, with the Higgins Industries [Company], the "Fairmiles" had small changes. They were just a tad shorter and narrower than the Higgins version so as to have some "wobble-room" in the Trent Canal locks.

"Fairmiles" were built at Orillia, Gravenhurst, Port Carling and Port Sandfield Ontario. The Greavette boats were tested on Lake Muskoka, while those built at Port Carling by the Duke family's "Minett - Shields" were tested on Lake Joseph and Lake Rosseau.

The "Fairmiles" used the same "marine Packard engines" as the Higgins boat. Packard marine and Packard's "Rolls-Royce Merlin" engines were both built at the Packard plant at

Hamilton. The engines were mechanically identical in most respects, making parts almost totally interchangeable and thus simplifying the inventory stocks. The major difference was that the marine engine was water-cooled and the “Merlin” aircooled. Many sources wrongly claim that the Fairmiles had Merlin engines.

The Rolls Royce marine engines were, nearly identical to those used during the 1920's speed boat races.

The Fairmiles were mainly built at Port Carling, Gravenhurst and Orillia, because these centres were building wooden boats, and could build them fast. As well, anyone endeavoring to “spy” on the construction would have some major difficulty “hiding” their identities; even now, folk in Gravenhurst, Bracebridge or Port Carling “know who belongs”.

The website <http://www.jproc.ca/rrp/fairmile2.html> contains an article on the Fairmiles written by Spud Roscoe, and edited by Jerry Proc. During World War II, Canadian shipyards built 456 merchant ships and 300 naval vessels. According to them, Fairmiles or “the little ships” were designed by the British Fairmile Company as a sister ship to the US Navy’s submarine chaser. Canadian shipyards built 80 Fairmiles for the Royal Canadian Navy, of which 59 were built in Ontario. They were known by number: HMC ML [Motor Launch] Q from Q50 to 129. Crew members knew them as Q Boats and referred to them by their Q number, Q Fifty to Q129. The eighty Canadian Fairmiles were built at several locations, including these sites in east-central Ontario: Greavette Boats Limited, Gravenhurst; Hunter Boats, Orillia; Minett-Shields Limited, Bracebridge and Port Carling.

Greavette Boats Limited, Gravenhurst, Ontario.
Q54, Q55, Q56

Hunter Boats, Orillia, Ontario.
Q60, Q61, Q92, Q93, Q109,

Minett – Shields Limited, Bracebridge, Ontario
Q57, Q58, Q59, Q74, Q75, Q76

THE HIGGINS 78' PT BOAT

Higgins 78' boats were periodically updated and reconfigured for the missions they were call upon to perform. These boats also took on a gun boat configuration, rather than their traditional torpedo role, because of the nature of wartime tactics in the Pacific. Many PT boats were given the tasks of harassing and controlling the enemy left behind on islands that were skipped over by the advancing allied forces. The PT boats became “Barge Busters” with their relentless attacks on enemy barges and boats used to supply and ferry the enemy from island to island. They were also called upon to support troop landings and rescues. Higgins boats played a large roll in the Mediterranean Sea area combating enemy shipping. Including duels with German E-boats or S-Boats (Schnellbooten) and heavily armored and armed barges known as F-lighters. PT-78, one of the first series of Higgins 78' boats, saw action in the Aleutians then later in

the Pacific.

Sir William Stephenson “Intrepid” and Lord Beaverbrook were both involved in the development of the “Fairmiles” here in Canada. Because they were wooden, these boats had to be built by companies who were directly involved in wooden construction. There simply was no time for “design-R & D”. Just take the plans and build. Boeckh Brush of Gravenhurst supplied the specialized brushes used for putting on the new “spar varnish” that was developed in the New Toronto plant of C. I. L. paints. All “northern boats” were trained the short distance from Gravenhurst to the head of Lake Couchiching at Washago. They were off loaded, and, then, as a “shakedown run”, sent down the Trent-Severn Waterway.

Until about 1970, the rail right-of-way and dock for these boats was still visible at Washago. Several “Fairmiles” were banged-up on the way down and were repaired at the Peterborough Canoe Company at the foot of King Street here in



Peterborough.

Incidentally: Sir William and Beaverbrook [who had connections from pre-WW-1 in Peterborough] came to Peterborough in connection with the building of the “Mosquito” fighter, bomber, & photo-plane, where canoe construction was applied to these wooden aircraft. The DeHavilland engineers who were here hated “our” mosquitoes; hence the plane’s moniker.

A direct connection to WW-2 and Peterborough was the development of the “Mosquito” bomber, fighter, and, photo-plane. A proto-type of the Mosquito was flown out of Peterborough’s Turner field south of Peterborough, down on Bensfort Road south of the Wallace Point road junction. I interviewed a man who flew one of Sir William Stephenson’s “Moon Squadron Mosquito” which was highly modified, using the “Merlin” air-racing engines and photographing German army installations. These engines had specialized exhaust-pipes that made the aircraft virtually invisible. The German radar was set about 100-feet, and, he was flying below that, so that the Germans never saw him coming across the Channel and could not get a gun-shot on him.

Dun and Bradstreet Canada's historic business archives

<http://www.canada.com/nationalpost/financialpost/story.html?id=bbf7bb3a-b015-4887-b8e5-6279ee9cc6ba>

National Post, November 17, 2006

The University of Toronto is the new home to Dun and Bradstreet Canada's coveted business archives, some of which predate Confederation. The collection profiles hundreds of Canadian businesses from 1865 to 1984. "It has such historical breadth," said Mary-jo Stevenson, with the U of T's Robarts Library, pictured at right. "It lists companies and towns that [no longer exist]." She said geographers are already interested in having a look, and there is no telling how the records might prove useful to researchers in other disciplines. D&B Canada said a collection with so much academic value should be in the hands of academics. Harvard University houses a similar archive of U.S. companies, which The New York Times called "the Holy Grail of business history."

The archives listserve carried a query about the location of the Dun and Bradstreet archives, and someone was able to retrieve this five year old announcement. The Trent Valley Archives has an 1890s version of the printed report and it is one of our favourite directories. It is possible to find the credit rating of any business in North America. The listings are by community, and these are listed within the state or province, arranged alphabetically United States first, and then Canada.

ONTARIO HERITAGE CONFERENCE, COBOURG, 3-5 JUNE 2011

John Marsh

Thanks to the Smith-Ennismore-Lakefield Heritage Committee, I was able to attend the first day of this heritage conference sponsored by the Architectural Conservancy of Ontario, Community Heritage Ontario and the Town of Cobourg. The conference was held mainly in the beautifully restored auditorium of Victoria Hall. Several hundred people with all sorts of backgrounds, ages, and interests participated, including good representation from the Peterborough area.

The theme of the conference was "Creating the Will", meaning the will to preserve heritage. The keynote speaker was Terry O'Reilly, an advertising expert, well known host of the radio series "The Age of Persuasion." While providing entertaining food for thought, most of his examples were American, and little reference was made to heritage. His main points were that that research is crucial, changing perceptions is difficult, and that one needs to "recruit the hearts" of those you wish to persuade.

Then, there was a discussion of the Saving Places television program. It is difficult to get such programs made, even more difficult to get them shown, especially on

CBC, and important to stress the human drama associated with heritage.

A session on "Engaging the Public – Achieving Community Buy-in" presented ideas for gaining support for heritage conservation. These included the need for heritage education, the potential of neighborhood character assessments, and ways to engage Franco-Ontarians.

Another session described the successful campaigns to save three important heritage buildings: The Dance Pavilion in Kincardine, the Victoria Hall in Cobourg, and the Church in Wesleyville.

Crucial to each campaign was enthusiastic leadership, widespread public support, fundraising and persistence. Saving the dance pavilion cost three times more than expected, the calls to preserve Victoria Hall began in 1949, and the restoration of the church will take five years.

My main conclusions from these sessions were that community heritage conservation requires clear and realistic goals, sustained leadership, a grass roots approach, but with government help, over a long period of time.

Other sessions at the conference dealt with "public perceptions of heritage conservation", "using technology and social media to empower heritage", "the economics of heritage" and "heritage contracting." As well, there were walking and bus tours to see heritage features in Cobourg, a ghost tour, and the usual social events, and exhibits.

Some of the useful documents I picked up were: "Acorn" – the journal of the Architectural Conservancy of Ontario; "Heritage Matters" – the magazine of the Ontario Heritage Trust; Three brochures of Heritage Port Hope entitled: Heritage Buildings Incentive Programs, Why Designate? Advantages of Designation, and Frequently Asked Questions about Designation. Also available were beautiful posters on "The Barns of Hamilton Township" and the doorways of heritage buildings in Cobourg.

The conference, while rather expensive, was well organized, well attended, useful and friendly. The next community heritage conference, with the theme "Beyond Borders: Heritage Best Practices" will be from May 31 to June 3, in Kingston. For information email: kingstonheritageconference2012@yahoo.ca.

TVA Open House and Volunteer & Donor Recognition BBQ Saturday, September 17: 4pm – 7pm

Come on out to our fall open house and donor/ volunteer recognition barbecue, this September 17, from 4 – 7pm. This is an opportunity to see the new annex, and see highlights from some of our recent acquisitions. as well as some of the fascinating new acquisitions we have made in recent months. There will be food, live music and door prizes. Everyone is welcome: Members of the public are encouraged to attend to find out more about the archives and the services we offer – so bring a friend!

R.S.V.P. 705-745-4404 or admin@trentvalleyarchives.com.

A moment's silence

We will really miss **Keith Goodfellow**, one of the pioneers of genealogy in this region, who passed away recently. Keith was often at our reading room for he lived within a few blocks of the Fairview Heritage Centre. We featured stories by Keith in the Heritage Gazette. He assisted us in printing Wilson Crow's history of Springfield, and provided the information for an interesting feature on his ancestors who founded Prince Albert, Saskatchewan after the Northwest Rebellion. He was generous and knowledgeable, and it was always a pleasure meeting him. Our condolences to his widow, to Brian and the rest of the family.

We notice that **Marvel Henning**, a long-time columnist with the Lakefield Herald, who had a fair reputation for spinning tales, passed away on June 6. Our condolences to her friends and family.

Bill Durant, 86, passed away on June 9. He and his wife, Meg, were stolid supporters of the Peterborough Historical Society and Hutchison House. We were colleagues on the PHS Board of Directors and was always sensible. He was a professional engineer with a 40 year career at CGE followed by a career at the Ontario Robotics Center. A great guy.

Dr Frances Stewart, 96, passed away in May. She was bright and alert, and even in recent months was writing letters to the editor. She and her late husband, Dr John Stewart, were keen supporters of all local historical projects.

People's Chime Centennial

There was a nice crowd to celebrate the centennial of the People's Chime, the largest set of bells between Ottawa and Toronto, and when erected as Peterborough's Coronation Day project was possibly the largest set of bells in Canada. This was an amazing story, and said much about the city's confidence during Edwardian times. **Prime Minister Stephen Harper** sent greetings to Peterborough to mark the occasion. The long-time former Dominion Carilloner, Dr. Gordon Slater, played a beautiful concert that was closely followed. The rain broke enough so that people could gather on the lawn to hear the pealing of the bells. Local members also played the bells, and in the evening the Peterborough Concert Band played. John Earnshaw and the Band each played tributes to Asa Huycke, a local musician who composed marches, one of which, the March Irresistible, was dedicated to the bandmen who in 1916 went overseas with the 93rd Battalion.


Knox United Church

The Knox United Church congregation held its final service in the historic landmark at Rubidge and Wolfe Streets. The Church had a rich history serving a largely working-class area near the huge Canadian General Electric works. The main church building was an attractive building in the auditorium style that marked other Peterborough churches with Presbyterian roots. The church remains a treasure and it is to be hoped that it will find new tenants who appreciate the fabric of the building. A small committee has been gathering archival elements and the Trent Valley Archives has promised to help with their efforts.



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This book examines the history of canoe building in an intriguing way, by telling the story of the business of canoe manufacturing. While impeccably researched, this book is much more than a business history. It brings to life stories and entrepreneurs once lost in business ledgers and historical documents. By focusing on the origins and fortunes of one of Peterborough's local canoe companies, author Ken Brown presents a broader narrative, one that ranges from the early days, when creative canoe-building pioneers first began in the region, through the glory days of the industry, when ambitious manufacturing concerns sold thousands of "Peterborough" and "Canadian" canoes around the globe.

COMING IN OCTOBER

\$20.00 152 pages
200 illustrations (43 in colour)
Available from TVA, the Canadian Canoe Museum, local bookstores or online and pre-publication sales at covertocover.ca



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[This is one of the occasional papers produced by the Peterborough Historical Society: ask us about others, too.]

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Thomas W. Poole, A sketch ... of the Town of Peterborough (1867) \$200 [This is a special first edition lovingly rebound in a blue cloth binding by John Burbidge.]

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Trent Valley Archives, Peterborough Interiors \$15 [A perfect souvenir of Peterborough featuring photographs of rooms and inside spaces mostly before 1930s.]

Wilson, Pete, Illustrated Historical Atlas of Peterborough County (2009) \$90 [Not to be confused with earlier atlases, the atlas reprints many early survey maps with names, and features the township sections of Mulvany's 1885 classic history.]