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# HERITAGE GAZETTE OF THE TRENT VALLEY

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*Cover photo: Trent Valley Archives, April 2021, as spring arrives. We are getting ready to welcome people back to our improved reading room. (Elwood H. Jones)*



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The Heritage Gazette of the Trent Valley is sent to members four times a year. We also publish an occasional newsletter, and provide a superior webpage, and presence on Facebook, You-tube and other social media. \* includes income tax receipt and some special perquisites. See cover for details.

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

The AGM for Trent Valley Archives was held on Zoom on Thursday, 22 April 2021. The business meeting covered the usual matters of an AGM. It was preceded by a special presentation by Bob Reid, discussing the water and rail connections between Campbellford and Peterborough.



We sell a wide range of local books, maps, photos and posters of historical and general interest; many described on our webpage. Please inquire as we always have changing stock.

## President's Corner

Alan Brunger

In this first issue of *Heritage Gazette of the Trent Valley*, in the current volume, I have arrived at my final contribution to “*President's Corner*” because my term of office ended after the 2020 Annual General Meeting, which was held on Thursday, April 22<sup>nd</sup> last. I have found the experience rewarding, although full of surprises. Needless to say, when I assumed the Presidency in April 2019, I had no idea of the pandemic that lay ahead, let alone the numerous challenges that would arise for the TVA.

Even after the first nine months of my term as President, my comments in the Gazette of February 2020, contained no hint of the turmoil about to inflict the whole world, within a few weeks. Subsequent “*President's corners*” describe various stages of the public health emergency, through which TVA persevered. I am pleased to say that we have weathered the storm relatively well – so far.

This success owes a great deal to the efforts of our volunteers and to the Associate Archivist, Heather Aiton-Landry. Our Board of Directors has met the challenges of the emergency well and have fully supported the Executive Committee and the Archivist, Elwood Jones, in his untiring efforts to sustain the TVA as a fully-fledged archives.

Fundraising from our usual sources resumed as soon as possible, albeit in a restricted way, owing to public health regulations limiting the size of social gatherings and the need for physical distancing. The Events committee organized a series of vital, revenue-producing tours, as well as four online talks by the archivists. These commenced with Elwood's remarks at the first online AGM, in July 2020, and, most gratifyingly, attracted increasing numbers of participants as the series developed.

The February 2021 issue of the Gazette was, as always, well edited by Elwood, and contained several excellent articles on local themes. It also included TVA's recognition of its Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF) grant and the Employment and Social Development Canada's, *New Horizons for Senior Programme* grant, for upgrading the infrastructure of the archival premises.

The public ceremony to recognize the grant from OTF took place immediately before the fourth TVA online talk in late February. We are grateful to both MPP, Dave Smith and to OTF representative, Les Kariunas, for agreeing to a virtual, rather than the usual, in-person ceremony.

The subsequent online talk by Heather, was helpfully entitled “*I used to date boys and now I date photographs*”. She revealed her many skills in estimating the age of old photos, ranging from analyzing the styles of clothing and hats, to background details, such as employing a magnifier to identify the year in the calendar on an office wall!

More recently, TVA has been fortunate to receive a \$5,000 grant from the *New Horizons for Seniors Programme*, to improve the interior of the premises during the public health emergency, specifically by replacing the old carpet in the Research Room, with more easily- cleaned, hygienic, vinyl flooring. The utility of the room has been further enhanced by painting its walls.

In my first “*President's Corner*”, two years ago, I referred to the Long-term Plan for the TVA, which had been developed under the guidance of Rick Meridew, my predecessor as President. I have been very grateful for the guidance of the plan and for Rick's helpful presence as Past President and, in addition, during the last ten months, as Treasurer.

I wish our incoming President, Steve Guthrie, every success in his assumption of the role. As Past president, I shall attempt to assist him in whatever manner I can. We should all benefit from the guidance provided by the Long-term Plan of the TVA.

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## Meet Candace Snoddon



We are pleased to welcome Candace Snoddon as an intern at Trent Valley Archives. Candace is completing the internship portion of her Graduate Certificate in Cultural Heritage Conservation and Management from Fleming College with us. She is an avid supporter of the preservation of history and takes particular interest in the preservation of the book as an object and artifact. In 2018, she completed a master's degree specializing in nineteenth century cloth bindings and repair techniques. During this time, she spent many hours in the Trent University Archives doing research and working closely with a collection of nineteenth century editions of Catharine Parr Traill's *The Canadian Crusoes: A Tale of the Rice Lake Plains*. While interacting with the archivist, Jodi Aoki, her interests were expanded into the preservation of all archival materials. Through the Cultural Heritage Conservation and Management program, and an internship at TVA, she hopes to expand her knowledge and gain experience in preservation practices as they relate to books, paper, and other archival materials.





Lakefield's Mill House is at the lower centre of this photo taken in the 1950s by Jack Millage and recently shared on the Village Lakefield facebook page. The site of D'Arcy's mill described in the Heritage Gazette of the Trent Valley in August 2020 disappeared because of the construction of the Trent Canal before 1914.

## Lakefield's Mill House

The Lakefield Mill House was the centre of considerable interest in late 2020 as the Regency-style building, the oldest stone house in Lakefield, was being sold by Habitat for Humanity. The site had been designated commercial since 1988, but had appeared on various lists of significant heritage buildings. Under the pressure of events the Heritage Committee of Selwyn Township held a public meeting, and appointed an heritage expert to prepare the case for its heritage significance. This was done but there was still concern of what might happen to the property. Happily the property was purchased by a local flower shop and nursery who plans to move her business to this site.

It is rare for the Heritage Gazette to publish such important articles as the one on the official opening of D'Arcy's Mill. It meant that people had direct information on the importance of the mill. The house was built in 1858 also.

Since the article appeared Ivan Bateman sent a very interesting letter to the editor which dated the mill's official opening on the basis of the information contained in the report that originally appeared in the Katchewanooka Herald and was reprinted by the Lakefield Leader.

### Katchewanooka Mill opened 25 January 1858

I have some comments on the story in the August 2020 issue of the opening of the D'Arcy Grist Mill Lakefield, 1859 the "Katchewanooka Herald 1858/1859?" leads your story, indicating doubt as to the correct year. The text gives a clue as to which date is correct and my interpretation is that 1858 is correct.

We can know definitely that the opening "event that took place last Monday" agrees with the 1858 calendar that associates it with the marriage "of the eldest daughter of our beloved Queen who on that day {25 January 1858} was to be united to the Prince of Prussia." Note that Monday in 1859 was on 24th January.

The Herald was represented that day by editors T.B. Allen and F. Barlee and we must assume that one or both of those gentlemen made the extensive notes that appeared in the paper. Lt. Colonel Strickland proposed the health of the couple and received an enthusiastic response from his audience.

It is reasonable to assume that the type for the page was set on the last evening before publication as the front page would have contained the latest news. The available daylight in January was scarce and candles were essential at that time. When assembling the slug, the compositor probably chose numeral 9 instead of 8.

My case rests. Ivan Bateman, 27 October 2020

## Frank Hyde D'Arcy



*Frank Hyde D'Arcy (via Ancestry)*

Frank Hyde D'Arcy (1838-1868), the son of Joseph D'Arcy (1780-1848) and Katherine Lucy Eliza Hyde (1799-1863) spent most of his brief life at Milford, Lymington, Hampshire, England.

He married Anna Maria Simpson in the summer of 1863, and they had two children, Emily (1866-1961) and Frank Hamilton Hyde (1868-1909).

F. H. D'Arcy was a bachelor when the Katchewanooka Mill opened in 1858, and Col. Samuel Strickland was the host on that occasion. D'Arcy was acting, probably, as an agent for his mother who had earlier dealings with Strickland.

In 1861, Frank D'Arcy was living with his mother, then aged 61, and his half-sister, Catherine, 29: Winchester, St. Faith, Hampshire, St. Thomas Ward, 206 Uplands according to the census taker. Later, Frank H. D'Arcy Esq. was living in Worcester, in a private residence, Hawford Lodge. The D'Arcy family appears to have been well-heeled.

It was reported through the McAllisters that Frank D'Arcy had two brothers. John Hyde D'Arcy (d. 1852 young) had studied at Harrow and Oxford's Balliol College).

D'Arcy's brother Joseph who was listed in the story as W. D. (William D'Arcy), a Crimean War veteran, came to Canada with Frank in 1855. Both Frank and William had studied at Cheltenham and were students at Samuel Strickland's agricultural school. Strickland wrote his memoirs, *Twenty seven years in Canada West*, while in England visiting his family and returned to Lakefield by 1855.

Frank Hyde D'Arcy also had a sister, Josephine, who married Capt. Thomas Anderson of the 78<sup>th</sup> Highlanders.

By his father's first marriage to Catherine West, Frank had a half-sister, Katherine, and a half-brother, Col George Abbas Kooli D'Arcy, who notably became Governor of Gambia. There was a third child by this marriage.

According to Robert Delledonne in *Nelson's Falls to Lakefield*, 23, John Hull leased and operated the property until

1906. He notes that John Hull (born 1842) learned the milling trade at age 15 in Tweed, spent seven years in Quebec, and came to Lakefield in 1864. (p. 86)



*Hull's Mill (TVA Mills of Peterborough County)*

Samuel Strickland sold the ½ acre lot to Catherine L. E. D'Arcy [Instrument P 12116] for £300. The property passed to Frank H. D'Arcy by his mother's will dated 3 February 1859 and registered 14 October 1863. [Instrument 16447]. These transactions are described TVA, Fonds 60, Abstract register for lot 27, Con 8.

Frank Hyde D'Arcy owned Katchewanooka Mill at the time of the mill's opening in 1858. In the 1865 directory for Lakefield, Nathaniel Shaw and Brock Wait were listed as sawmill owners, Hull's Mill, Nelson, Street. As well, John Hull was listed as the proprietor for the Katchewanooka Mills.

John Hull purchased the property 20 January 1868 from Frank H. D'Arcy and his wife. [The indenture is in the Trent Valley Archives, Fonds 60, Smith 30.] It was described as a half-acre village lot, pt. lot 27 in the 8<sup>th</sup> concession of Smith. The witnesses, in the City of Worcester, England, were the solicitor, Thomas Garmston Hyde and William Thomas Morris, clerk to Messrs Hyde & Clarke, solicitors; in the presence of the mayor of Worcester, William Webb.

After the property, which ran along the edge of the river, was described, there was the additional comment, "Together with all the interests, rights, privileges and easements conveyed and granted by the late Samuel Strickland in a conveyance of the said premises to the late Katherine Lucy Eliza Darcy mother of the said party of the first part which said deed is registered in the Register Office of the County of Peterborough."

On 20 July 1871, John Hull acquired adjacent properties totalling three acres and 53 perches, "more or less", from Joseph William D'Arcy of Lymington, Southampton. The Lord Mayor of London certified that he had met with Henry Theophilus Carr and J. W. D'Arcy, 20 July 1871. This purchase included part of the south east part of lot 27 in the 8<sup>th</sup> concession, and the property described in the 1859 plan by V. M. Clementi, surveyor, as "S. Strickland Esqre". This block was bounded on the north by Smith Street, on the south by Eighth Concession Street (later known as Bridge Street), on the west by Clementi Street, and "on the East by property now belonging to [John Hull] and a piece of Property



formerly owned by one William A. Sharp.” Also, this deed included lot 26 in the seventh concession, about one acre. Carr was a clerk in the office of Patmore Walls, solicitors, of the City of London. [Trent Valley Archives, Fonds 60, Smith 522]

John Hull and his wife Elma sold this lot and several other nearby properties for \$14,000 to the Dickson Company of Peterborough Limited, 29 September 1906. [TVA, Fonds 60, Instrument Lakefield 2023]

There is a passing reference to D’Arcy’s mill in *Through the Years in Douro*, 35. Diane Robnik in *The Mills of Peterborough County* has good pictures of the Hull mill which she says was dismantled in 1920. Frank Hyde D’Arcy’s will, with effects valued under £12,000, was read 24 July 1868. The summary read, “The Will of Frank Hyde D’Arcy, formerly of Lymington in the County of Southampton but late of Bevere Firs in the Parish of Claines in the County of Worcester Esquire deceased who died 15 June 1868 at Bevere Firs aforesaid was proved at the Principal Registry by the oaths of Anna Maria D’Arcy of Bevere Firs aforesaid Widow the Relict during Widowhood Joseph William D’Arcy of the “Hyde Park” Hotel Oxford-street in the County of Middlesex Esquire the Brother and George Jeremiah Stiles of Lymington aforesaid Gentlemen the Executors.

The abstract register for the Township of Smith, 180, for lot 27, con 8, lists the transactions tied to this property.

All 200 acres was patented to the Canada Company, 20 Aug 1831. This was sold to George S. Boulton, 14 Mar 1835,

registered 17 Feb 1846, for £100. [# 1517]

George S. Boulton sold all 200 acres to Zaccheus Burnham, 1846. £200 [# 1518]

Burnham parceled the land and sold this 4 acres with other lands to Samuel Strickland in 1856 for £400 [#10046]

Strickland sold ½ acre to Catherine L. E. D’Arcy for £300 by 6 February 1858 [#12116] Katchewanooka Mill, built by Frank Hyde D’Arcy, opened 25 January 1858

Strickland sold part of the s.e. corner 3.53 acres for £365 to Frank H. D’Arcy, February to May 1860; covered by a mortgage from Samuel Strickland for £300 [#13919]

The last will of Catherine E. D’Arcy, dated 3 February 1859, was registered 14 October 1863 and related to the mill property [#16447]

Frank H. D’Arcy et ux sold the property +- ½ acre to John Hull for \$5,000, Jan Feb 1868. D’Arcy retained a mortgage for \$2,500 on the same property. The mortgage was discharged to Anna M. D’Arcy, Joseph Wm D’Arcy and George J. Stiles executor of the Frank H. D’Arcy estate [Lakefield 30 TVA]

Joseph William D’Arcy in July / August 1871 sold 3.53 acres to John Hull for \$1200. With other lands. “Marked on plan as Strickland’s Place.” [Lakefield #522 TVA]

## NOTED ARCHITECT WM. BLACKWELL DIES IN 88<sup>TH</sup> YEAR

*Peterborough Examiner, 30 December 1937 [TVA Cournoyea Collection]*

Designer of many of Peterborough’s most prominent buildings, William Blackwell, well-known architect, died in his 88<sup>th</sup> year in Nicholls Hospital this morning. He had been in fair health until the past two weeks and his passing was unexpected.

The original Y.M.C.A. and Y.W.C.A. buildings are two of the monuments by which the veteran will be remembered in this city. He co-operated with the late John Belcher in designing the Public Library building. Park Street Baptist Church and St. Luke’s Anglican Church were of his design and he planned both the Bonner-Worth and Auburn Mills of the present Dominion Woolens and Worsteds. At the time the Armouries were constructed he served as the Dominion Government’s resident architect.

Mr. Blackwell was born in Lakefield, the son of the late James Blackwell and Frances Reid. He obtained his early schooling in Peterborough and commenced his study of architecture under Walter Strickland in Toronto. Studies in New York and Winnipeg followed.

Establishing himself in Peterborough as a young man, Mr. Blackwell continued the practice of his profession throughout the years until his advancing age forced his retirement from active daily work seven years ago. Even to present works, however, he continued his interest in the work, visiting the office where the architectural practice is carried on by his son, W. R. L. Blackwell frequently. At the original organization of the Ontario Association of Architects in 1889, he was a member of the directorate and was lately regarded as the oldest member.

Throughout his life he took a keen interest in public affairs. In politics he remained of Liberal persuasion. He was a devoted fisherman and hunterman in his earlier years and during many years pursued photography as a hobby. He was a member of St. John’s Anglican Church.

Surviving are his wife, Maude A. Hales, two sons R. N. N. Blackwell of Jacksonville, Florida and W. R. L.

Blackwell of this city. Two brothers remain, Edward Blackwell of Brockville and James Blackwell of Peterborough.

The funeral arrangements are to be announced on Friday.

-30-

From the Biographical Dictionary of Architects in Canada

**BLACKWELL, William** (1850-1937) dominated the architectural scene in Peterborough County for nearly forty years. Born in nearby Lakefield, Ont. on 24 July 1850 he articulated with **Walter Strickland** of Toronto (in 1872-75) then worked in Winnipeg and New York City from 1875 to 1879. He opened his own office in Peterborough in 1880 and practiced successfully until 1919 when he invited his son **Walter R.L. Blackwell** to join him in a new partnership. He was among the first architects to introduce the Romanesque Revival style to central Ontario. Significant examples of his work executed in this style include the Academy of Music at Lindsay, Ont. (1892) and the facade of the Y.M.C.A., Peterborough (1895-96). Blackwell continued to take an active interest in professional activities until 1930 when he retired, leaving the practice in the hands of his son. He died in Peterborough on 30 December 1937 (obit. Peterborough Examiner, 30 Dec. 1937, 9; R.A.I.C. Journal, xv, Feb. 1938, 44; inf. Ontario Assoc. of Architects). A photographic portrait of Blackwell can be found in C.A.B., ii, Dec. 1890. The Ontario Archives in Toronto holds a collection of architectural drawings prepared by W. Blackwell between c. 1890 and 1919, and by W. & W.R.L. Blackwell between 1919 and 1950.

## PETERBOROUGH

ST. LUKE'S ANGLICAN CHURCH, Ashburnham, Sunday School, 1885; extension to chancel of the church, with alterations, 1886 (Daily Examiner [Peterborough], 23 Oct. 1885, 1, descrip.; 4 Dec. 1886, 4, descrip.)

GEORGE STREET, at Dublin Street, commercial block for Richard Hall, 1886 (Daily Evening Review [Peterborough], 23 Oct. 1886, 4, descrip.)

DICKSON STREET, residence for A. Brodie, 1886 (Daily Evening Review [Peterborough], 23 Oct. 1886, 4, descrip.)

RUBIDGE STREET, pair of houses for William Lech, 1886 (Daily Evening Review [Peterborough], 25 Oct. 1886, 3)

ROBINSON STREET, Ashburnham, mansion for John C. Sullivan, 1886 (Daily Evening Review [Peterborough], 26 Oct. 1886, 4, descrip.)

BENSON STREET, residence for the architect, 1887 (Daily Evening Review [Peterborough], 5 Nov. 1887, 1)

WATER STREET, at Charlotte Street, hotel for the Chamberlain Estate 'to be occupied by T. Cavanagh', 1887 (Daily Evening Review [Peterborough], 5 Nov. 1887, 1, descrip.)

NICHOLLS HOSPITAL, Argyle Street, 1888 (Daily Evening Review [Peterborough], 30 Nov. 1888, 3, descrip.; 25 Jan. 1890, 3, descrip.)

WATER STREET, residence for John B. McWilliams, 1888 (M. Kidd, Peterborough's Architectural Heritage, 1978, 171, illus.)

AYLMER STREET, at Dalhousie Street, residence for W.H. Law, 1888 (Daily Evening Review [Peterborough], 30 Nov. 1888, 3, descrip.)

AYLMER STREET, two houses for B. Shortly, 1889 (Daily Examiner [Peterborough], 26 Oct. 1889, 4)

TOWN HALL & MARKET BUILDING, Elizabeth Street, Ashburnham, 1889 (Daily Examiner [Peterborough], 28 Oct. 1889, 2)

WATER STREET, residence for Dr. Carmichael, 1890 (Daily Examiner [Peterborough], 7 Jan. 1891, 4, descrip.)

CHARLOTTE STREET METHODIST CHURCH, new Sunday School Hall, 1891 (Daily Examiner [Peterborough], 19 Sept. 1891, 4, descrip.)

YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION, George Street at Murray Street, 1896 (Daily Examiner [Peterborough], 28 April 1896, 5, descrip.; dwgs. at OA)

GEORGE STREET METHODIST CHURCH, parsonage for the church, 1897 (C.R., viii, 27 May 1897, 2)

MURRAY STREET BAPTIST CHURCH, major addition, 1900 (C.R., xi, 3 Oct. 1900, 3)

SOUTH CENTRAL SCHOOL, 1901 (C.R., xii, 29 May 1901, 3, t.c.)

CANADIAN CORDAGE & MFR. CO., factory, offices, heating plant, 1901; major additions, 1903 (C.R., xii, 4 Sept. 1901, 2, t.c.; xiv, 23 Sept. 1903, 2, t.c.)

OPERA HOUSE, for Mr. Bradburn, 1902 (C.R., xiv, 18 Feb. 1902, 2)

ST. PAUL'S PRESBYTERIAN MISSION CHURCH, Wolfe Street at Reid Street, 1902-03 (Daily Examiner [Peterborough], 2 Feb. 1903, 4, descrip.)

GEORGE STREET, at Charlotte Street, commercial block for W.J. Taylor, 1903 (C.R., xiv, 11 March 1903, 2)

CENTRAL MILLING CO., grain elevator, 1903 (C.R., xiv, 27 May 1903, 2, t.c.)

YOUNG WOMEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION, Aylmer Street at Simcoe Street, 1904-05 (Evening Examiner [Peterborough], 26 April 1905, 5 & 8, illus. & descrip.)

WATER STREET, residence for J.J. McBean, 1905 (C.R., xvi, 3 May 1905, 4)

STEWART STREET, residence for Mrs. Campbell, 1905 (C.R., xvi, 3 May 1905, 4)  
FIRE HALL, Aylmer Street, 1906 (C.R., xvi, 24 Jan. 1906, 5)  
KING EDWARD SCHOOL, Aylmer Street, 1906 (dwgs. at OA)  
ISOLATION HOSPITAL, 1910 (C.R., xxiii, 25 Aug. 1909, 21)  
KING GEORGE SCHOOL, Hunter Street East, 1911 (dwgs. at OA)  
QUEEN MARY SCHOOL, Monaghan Road, 1912 (dwgs. at OA)  
COUNTY COURT HOUSE, Water Street, extensive repairs after fire at Quaker Oats Plant, 1917 (M. Kidd, Peterborough's Architectural Heritage, 1978, 166)

## ELSEWHERE

LINDSAY, ONT., Opera House, Lindsay Street at Kent Street, 1892 (Canadian Post [Lindsay], 30 Dec. 1892, 5, descrip.; Lindsay Watchman, 12 Jan. 1893, 1, descrip.; dwgs. at OA)  
GUELPH, ONT., Opera House, Upper Wyndham Street at Woolwich Street, 1893 (C.R., iv, 8 June 1893, 2)  
OTTAWA, ONT., Ottawa Porcelain & Carbon Co., Isabella Street, factory, 1895 (C.R., vi, 2 May 1895, 2)  
PORT HOPE, ONT., alterations and remodeling of St. Lawrence Hall, Walton Street, 1896 (C.R., vii, 10 Sept. 1896, 1)  
MADOC, ONT., Methodist Church, 1899-1900 (North Hastings Review [Madoc], 13 July 1899, 1; dwgs. at OA)  
BOBCAYGEON, ONT., Knox Presbyterian Church, 1900-01 (C.R., xi, 15 Aug. 1900, 2, t.c.; dwgs. at OA)  
BURLEIGH FALLS, ONT., hotel for Thomas Darcy, 1905 (C.R., xvi, 31 May 1905, 2)  
LINDSAY, ONT., a chapel and vault at Riverside Cemetery, Lindsay Street South near Highway 7, 1908-09 (Lindsay Post, 23 Oct. 1908, 5)  
BETHANY, ONT., Manvers Township Hall, 1912 (Manvers Twp., Minutes of Council, 10 Feb. 1912; Watchman-Warder [Lindsay], 29 Feb. 1912, 9, t.c.)



The following are notes from Elwood Jones computer.

This house was designed by Blackwell and was his home. In later years it was home to the principal of the Teachers College next door and also of Professor Christopher Greene and Jay. Greene was an expert on architectural history and a long-time member of PACAC.

Messrs. Ranney and Blackwell also prepared plans for a handsome residence for Mr. J.C. Sullivan who proposes building on Robinson street. The building will be fine red brick, three stories high with a tower. (Examiner 12 May 1886)

Also by William Blackwell: Brodie house, 505 Dickson, 1886 (Robert Fair house); John C. Sullivan, Robinson Street, 1886; for William Blackwell, Benson Street,

1887; for John B. McWilliams, Water and London, 1888; for W. H. Law, Aylmer at Dalhousie, 1888; two houses for B. Shortly, Aylmer north of McDonnell, 1889 (one is the Howson house); for J. J. McBean, Water Street, 1905; for Mrs Campbell, Stewart Street, 1905. Note also Blackwell supplied plans for Howson house, London Street, 1917.

While Blackwell was born in Lakefield, his family seems to have lived by 1861 in Douro Township, on a property still standing, 1066 Armour Road, next to the Peterborough Golf and Country Club.

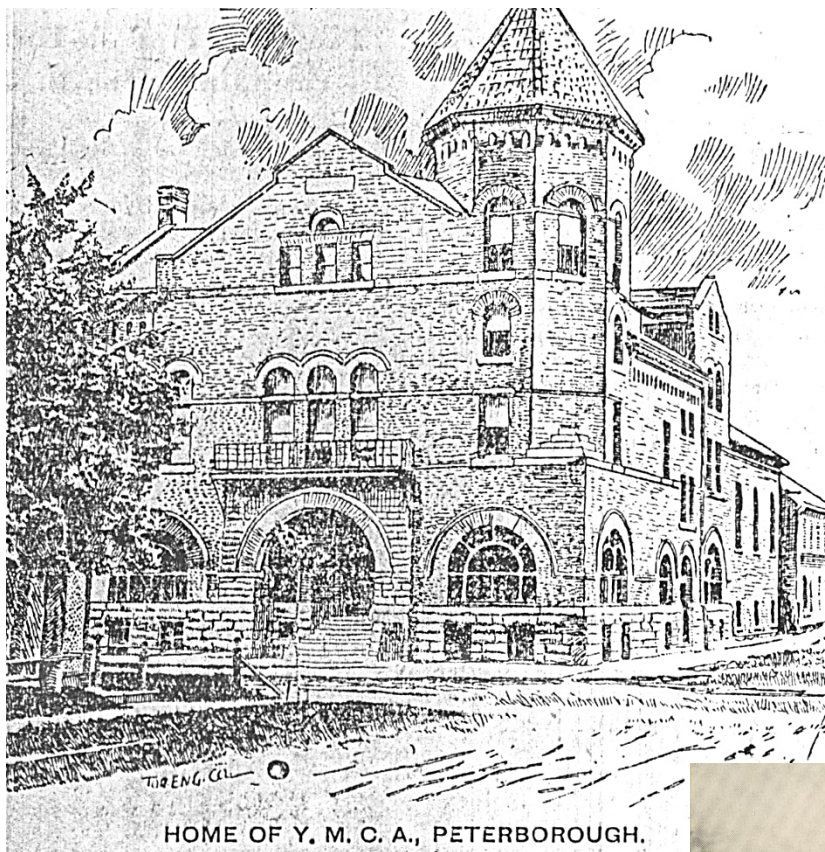
I print the biography of Lieutenant James Rolleston, but do not know why the name was added to that of William Blackwell's son, Walter.



## ROLLESTON. (LIEUTENANT, 1811. F-P, 11; H-P., 32.)

JAMES ROLLESTON, born 1 May, 1791, at Southampton, is son of Sam. Rolleston, Esq., a Magistrate and Deputy-Lieutenant for co. Hants.

This officer entered the Navy, 1 Jan. 1804, as Midshipman, on board the *DICTATOR* 64, Capts. Chas. Tinling and Rich. Hawkins; joined, in the following Sept., the *IMPÉTUEUX* 74, Capt. Thos. Byam Martin; and in Nov. 1805 was received on board the *POMPÉE* 74. While in that ship, which bore the flags successively of Admirals Sir Wm. Sidney Smith and Henry Edwin Stanhope, he was present, in 1806, at the defence of Gaeta, the capture of Capri, and the battle of Maida; and, in 1807, at the passage of the Dardanells, the destruction of the Turkish squadron at Point Pesquies, and the taking of Copenhagen. On the surrender of the Danish fleet he assisted in fitting out the *CHRISTIAN VII.* of 60 guns. After serving for two years and eight months in the Mediterranean on board the *HYPERION* 36, Capt. Thos. Chas. Brodie, and *CENTAUR* 74, bearing the flag of Sir Sam. Hood, he was there nominated, 29 Nov. 1810, Acting-Lieutenant of the *HIBERNIA* 120, also the flag-ship of Sir S. Hood. His appointment to the *HIBERNIA* being -confirmed by a commission dated 8 June, 1811, he continued attached to that ship under the flag of Sir Rich. Goodwin Keats until June, 1815. He then invalided. His next appointment was to the *PERSEUS* 22, Capt. Edw. Henry A'Court, in which vessel he served on the Mediterranean, Newfoundland, Halifax, and Home stations, from March, 1813, until Feb. 1816, the last five months of the time as Acting-Commander. He has since been on half-pay. AGENTS – Messrs. Stilwell. [*Naval Biographical Dictionary* ed. William Richard O'Byrne]



HOME OF Y. M. C. A., PETERBOROUGH.

as the home of the Peterborough Theatre Guild.

*One of Blackwell's most important works was the YMCA at the corner of George and Murray Streets. It is seen here in an engraving by the Toronto Engraving Company 1906.*

*The façade of this part of the building has been largely preserved in the construction of the Y-Lofts, which has in recent months risen to its six storeys.*

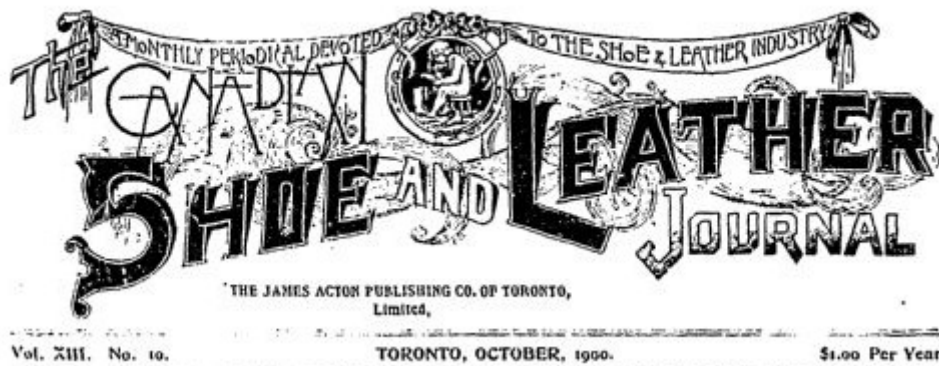
*St. Luke's Anglican Church in Ashburnham, seen here in 1905, was Blackwell's early triumph. The building has survived a fire and been repurposed*



# THE PETERBORO SHOE AND THE NEILL SHOE STORE

John Marsh

Provoked by the photograph of a Peterboro Shoe in the Heritage Gazette of May 2020, I decided to see if I could find out more information about this footwear. On my desktop computer I Googled “Peterboro Shoe” but found nothing and was asked if I meant “Peterborough Shoe.” In which case, there were numerous references to shoe shops currently in Peterborough, such as Pensieris. Strangely, at least to me, when I Googled “Peterboro Shoe” on my iPad, I was alerted to a Google Book entitled “The Shoe and Leather Journal.



The Canadian Shoe and Leather Journal was published by James Acton Publishing Co. of 32-34 Lombard Street, Toronto. The Journal began about 1888, came out on the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month and cost \$1 per year. The company also published The Canadian Baker and Confectioner and the Furniture Upholstery Journal combined with the Undertakers Gazette. The Shoe and Leather Journal, volume 10, number 6, of June 1897 includes the following information that may be relevant to knowing more about the Peterboro Shoe.

An article entitled “Meanderings of the Wanderer” reported very comprehensively on what was happening in the shoe businesses, primarily in south-western Ontario. It is noted that in Woodstock: “John K. Neill, the Peterboro shoe man has a large and well equipped store under the management of Mr. F. Squires who reports a very satisfactory spring trade notwithstanding the unfavourable weather.” It is also noted that in London: “R. Neill, the Peterboro shoe king has taken over the business of E.S. Neill, Dundas Street. The manager reports trade fair up to date.” So, at least three different, but presumably related Neills were involved in the shoe business in Ontario at this

time. However, after this time and in Peterborough, it is R. Neill who persists in the shoe business.

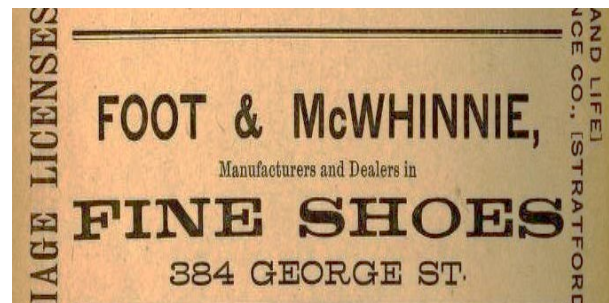
In the September 1897 issue of The Shoe and Leather Journal it was reported that in Brockville: “R. Neill, the shoe King of Peterboro, is largely in evidence here with a good establishment and stock to match. He says business is good.” Presumably this is the Robert Neill listed under boot and shoe manufacturers and dealers in The Union Publishing Company’s “Peterborough Directory, including Ashburnham, 1897” as being located at 350-354 George Street. The

numerous other boot and shoe manufacturers and dealers listed in this 1897 Directory were:

J.H. Ames, 405 George Street  
James Carey, 450 George Street  
Gough Bros., 376 George Street  
J.T. Stinson, 364 George Street  
W.H. Anthony, 159 Simcoe Street

P.V. Delaire, 204 Charlotte Street  
John Hetherington, 523 George Street  
P.J. Hickey, 178 Hunter Street  
William McCall, 329 McDonnell Street  
John Miller, 517 George Street  
J.W. Miller, 438 George Street  
Thomas Rountree, 416 Water Street  
Wm. Sanxter, 263 Sherbrooke Street.

The most appropriate business name was that of: Foot & McWhinnie at 384 George Street.



That is fourteen boot and shoe stores, with nine on George Street alone!



As well, in Ashburnham, there were Francis Hamilton, s.s. Elizabeth, Mark (Ashburnham) and John Kylie, n.s. Elizabeth, 2e Driscoll Terrace, Ashburnham.

The September 1897 issue of the Shoe and Leather Journal also reported a new shoe shop in Peterboro. "Mr. M. Murty, who has recently opened up business on Hunter Street in that place, and whose establishment will be known as the Oriental Shoe Store, is receiving flattering comments by the Peterboro local press. His stock includes all the newest things from the best manufacturers of Canadian shoes besides some American lines. His store is well appointed and has recently been equipped with new furnishings and has been made very attractive both exterior and interior."

Almost every issue of The Shoe and Leather Journal mentioned some specialized or bizarre types of shoe. The July 1897 issue described an electric lamp that could be attached to a shoe to aid walking at night. The August 1897 issue advertised bicycle boots for ladies, and shoes to walk on water. The December 1897 issue described shoes to cure Rheumatism made from sheepskin and asbestos. In July 1897, an article entitled "The Golden West" reported that "the shoe trade is on a footing in Victoria that might well be envied by other cities in the Dominion." The issue in February 1900 described an "automobile shoe" "made for warmth and also to protect the wearer's trousers from being spotted by the grease and lubricator of the wheels and machinery." The July 1900 issue had a story about a man wearing "vegetarian shoes" who lay down in a field to sleep only to awake and find that sheep had eaten them! I have yet to determine conclusively when the Neill shoe business began in Peterborough. There is reference in the list of City designated heritage properties to a R. Neill leasing in 1833 a building for a shoe store at 350-354 George Street, on the east side between Charlotte and Simcoe streets that had been a merchant business of John James Lundy. There is also a reference to a Robert Neill Co. selling shoes in Barrie since the 1850s. However, Peterborough resident Joan Hogan has a metal shoe horn with the inscription "Neill's Reliable Footwear Since 1865." Also, Dan DeLong has a six inch ruler with the inscription: "R. Neill Limited, 1865 – 1940, Quality Footwear for 76 Years." Curiously, there is no obvious listing of the Neill business in the directories for Peterborough from 1858 until the



mention in 1897 described above. After that the Neill shoe store features prominently in the news on several occasions.

On 27 February, 1900, the so-called China Hall fire occurred in Peterborough at the corner of George and Simcoe streets. This has been described by Elwood Jones (Peterborough Examiner 7 January 2017) and is noteworthy here because as a result "smoke and water damage was done to the adjacent businesses. In the morning, the R. Neill shoe store, a double store, had two feet of water in both cellars." The March 1900 issue of the Shoe and Leather Journal reported: "R. Neill, Peterboro, Ontario, shoes stock damaged by fire and water." This is one of many references in the Journal to shoe stores and tanneries (including the Paterson Tannery on Aylmer Street) being damaged or destroyed by fires. Despite this the business continued. The June 1900 issue of the Journal reported that in Peterboro "R. Neill, sometimes called the Retail Shoe King, has his headquarters here, and a fine establishment it is. It was said that business was good." The same issue also noted that in Lindsay there was a "R. Neill boots and shoe branch store in charge of J. Kenny who informed me that business was good." Incidentally, this issue also described and praised a new brochure promoting the Kawartha Lakes, a name only recently adopted. I have yet to determine what other Neill stores existed at this time, but the July 1900 issue of the Shoe and Leather Journal referred to "Mr. Robt.



Neill, one of Ontario's foremost retail shoe men." Certainly by 1905, there was a Neill store in Toronto at 123 Dundas Street and there remained one in Woodstock.



In 1917, there were still fourteen boot and shoe stores including the one of Robert Neill. In January 1918, Neill's shoe store, still at 350-354 George Street, was damaged again, this time by fire. The Examiner reported that "fire broke out at 5.30 o'clock this morning, at the rear of the big Robert Neill Shoe Store. The Neill store with its huge stock had been completely wiped out." However, as in 1900, it resumed business at the same location.

The Vernon's Directory of Peterborough for 1927 listed thirteen stores selling boots and shoes, nine being on George Street, including the one of Robert Neill. However, only one Boot and Shoe Manufacturer was listed, namely E.F. Ackerman Son & Co. Ltd at 201 George Street. In 1937, R. Neill was still in business at 350-354 George Street and had an advertisement in Vernon's Directory that offered footwear, hosiery, luggage, shoe repairs, and the innovation of x-ray shoe fittings.

It is evident that Neill continued to have stores in other locations in Ontario. There was still a Neill store in Lindsay in 1919. The Guelph Museum has an invoice dated 1922 from a store in that city. It is titled "Neill The Shoe Man" and stamped "R. Neill." It offered "Boots, Shoes, Trunks and Valises." Eventually, there was at least one store in northern Ontario. On 22 March 1937 the Porcupine Advance newspaper reported that R. Neill Limited had opened a "footwear store" at 9 Pine Street in Timmins. A large display advertisement in the paper showed what was "New for Easter," with shoes for women, men and kiddies ranging in price from \$1-10. In 1948 there is another reference to the R. Neill shoe store in Barrie.

The Vernon's Peterborough Directory for 1947 divided shoe businesses into "Shoemakers" and "Shoes." There were eighteen shoemakers, six being on George Street and one on at 166 Simcoe Street named The Model Electric Shoe Repairs. There were nine shoe stores, all on George Street, including R. Neill Limited still at 350-354 George. Some were chain stores such as Agnew-Surpass Shoe Stores Limited, Canadian Department Stores Limited, Kent Shoe Stores and Lincoln Shoe Stores Limited. By 1957 the number of businesses listed as Shoemakers had fallen to thirteen,

but the number of shoe stores had risen to thirteen. R. Neill Limited was still one of them but another business that sold shoes was T. Eaton Co. on the corner of George and Charlotte.

The Vernon's Directory for 1967, under "Shoemakers" listed only seven businesses and of these, six had "Shoe Repair" in their names suggesting that they may not have been manufacturing shoes. There were still thirteen businesses listed under "Shoes." George Street remained the most common location, eleven of them being there, including a Bata Shoe Store, but there was now one outside downtown, Maher Shoe Stores at Brookdale Plaza. The Neill store was not listed but remained in business. Ed Arnold in his book George Street Stories recalls that "In the 1960s, this part of George was still thriving with a great variety of businesses: a shoe store, R. Neill Limited, operated from a four-storey building on the east side of the street where people could go in to get x-rays to show the size of their feet."

A request for further information on the Neill store that I posted on the blog "Peterborough in the Fifties and Sixties" yielded a variety of recollections. Like Ed Arnold, many people remember the x-ray machine. Eddie Mac said "that's where you put your foot in an X-ray machine to see if the shoe fit." Alice Higginson said "she loved looking at my bones." Jean Rose recalled "running in there and sticking my feet in that machine in the 50s just for fun." Several people are now wondering whether it was good to have one's feet x-rayed! Joan Hogan had a family connection with the store: "My aunt worked in the office upstairs of the shoe store." She recalled "her taking me there to visit her co-workers and buying me new shoes." Sandra Butcher also went there as a kid. "I used to get shoes there as a kid. At the back of the store was a wide set of three or four stairs that you sat on to get measured up." Another person, Carolyn Corp, noted "Mom took me there for my white boots." Marilyn Dallin said "I remember the children's section on the main level. It was a separate section with small chairs for the children to sit in. I was taken there for shoes as a child."

Another feature of the store that people remember was the way payments were made. Dan Delong's mother worked there and she told him that "the method of payment (was) through pneumatic tubes to a gondola office, where change was made and sent back to the clerk." Apparently such tubes were also used at the Civic Hospital. Dan Delong also mentioned that "the building had an elevator to an upper floor used for shoe storage." He has "a low wooden bench, used in the boys children's department as a fitting bench."

Although the store at this time was still called R. Neill, several people have noted that it was owned or managed by Clare Collins. Dan Delong states that "the

President and Managing Director was Clare G. Collins at 350-354 George.” Mary Hardill, Lindsay believes “it was owned by Clare Collins who also had the steel-toed work footwear.” Theresa Brenkolt is unsure whether Clare Collins owned the store, however she remembers him “being a salesman there,” and that “he did own Collins Safety Shoes on MacDonald Street until he sold the company to Greb Shoes in Kitchener.”

reveal the origin of the Peterboro Shoe, but certainly more about the history of the shoe trade in Peterborough that I can relay to readers in future.



*Demolition of buildings on Market Square, 1974. Neill Shoe Store was then the Montreal Shoe Store, the second building south of Simcoe Street. (Trent Valley Archives)*

In 1973, the building on George Street that housed the Neill store was demolished as part of the development of Peterborough Square. Some of the stores that were displaced reopened elsewhere in the city and a few shoe stores opened in Peterborough Square. However, for whatever reason, the Neill store did not reopen elsewhere. So after over 100 years the multi-generational Neill shoe dynasty came to an end in Peterborough.

I never expected a journal on the shoe and leather business and the history of shoe stores in Peterborough could be so interesting, though I have yet to determine who made the Peterboro Shoe. [Ed. Our readers confirmed that the Peterboro Shoe was made in Peterborough by Ackerman's.] Coincidentally, just as I was finishing this article I was able to acquire on eBay a DVD with 168 issues from 1910 to 1923 of the *Canadian Shoe and Leather Journal*. Perhaps they will

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## Peterborough County Court House

There has been considerable progress made by Peterborough County, the City Heritage Office, PACAC and the +VG Architects to produce an Heritage Designation Brief. Erik Hanson and Jennifer Guerin have led the complex process and have had good co-operation along the way.

This is an excerpt from the brief, which may be viewed at City Hall during open hours.

### SHORT STATEMENT OF REASONS FOR DESIGNATION

The Courthouse property has cultural heritage value or interest as a prominent judicial complex within the city of Peterborough. It is a property which includes the original Courthouse designed by Joseph Scobell, 1879 renovations by John Belcher, 1917 repairs and renovations by William Blackwell, Registry and County Offices addition by Craig & Zeidler in 1960, the Heritage Jail Park, Victoria Park (originally Courthouse Square), and the residence of the caretaker. The Courthouse has been in continuous operation since its completion in 1840, first as the District then County Courthouse and it continues to serve the community in this capacity as the Ontario Court of Justice and Ontario Family Court. It has specific physical and design value as a fine and very early example of a judicial complex from the earliest days of the Province of Upper Canada.

Historically, it has direct associations with and yields significant information regarding the evolution of the judicial system in Ontario from its inception. It also yields information about the importance of location and the relationship between buildings and greenspace which was typical of early courthouse design in Ontario. Contextually the Courthouse property defines the area as a landmark – in its siting, design, and as an important early judicial building and as one of the earliest public buildings constructed in the town, overlooking one of the town's first public parks. The setting is in the historic centre of Peterborough, giving the building a dignified and prominent place in the community. In many ways, the property has influenced community values over the course of its 180-year history.

### SUMMARY OF HERITAGE ATTRIBUTES TO BE DESIGNATED

The Reasons for Designation include the following heritage attributes and apply to all built and natural features within the boundaries of the property including, built elements, materials, landscaping, trees, views, and contextual relationship with the surrounding neighbourhood.

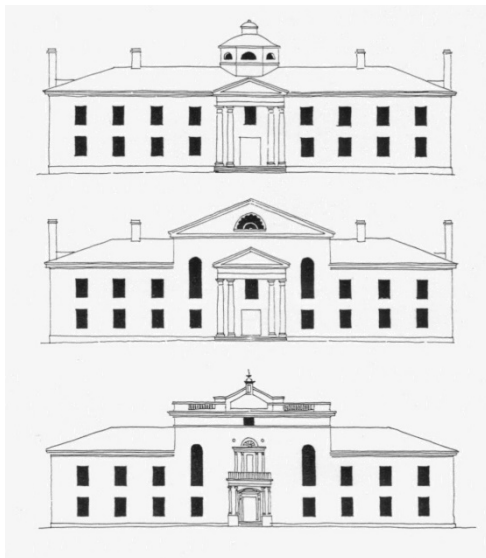
#### Exterior Elements:

##### Courthouse:

- Peterborough's first Courthouse.
- Symmetrical plan layout of central block and flanking wings with tripartite design reflected on the West façade
- Lesser additions to Courthouse – south jail keeper's residence and north addition
- Original 1840 two-storey, three bay random bedded split faced limestone and brick construction with carved stone quoins and window and door surrounds along with interventions made in 1879 and 1917
- Principal façade with an unobstructed view of Victoria Park and the city beyond
- Symmetrical composition of main block
- 1917 roof including:
  - Balustrade
  - Metal cornice with dentil details
  - Central ornamented pediment
- Front portico and upper balustrade
- Corinthian pilasters supporting the front portico
- Entablature with dentils and cornice
- Blind Palladian window feature with associated pilasters and entablature c. 1917 on West façade
- Medallions flanking Palladian window feature
- Main entrance:
  - Double doors and transom



- Decorative stone door surrounds
- Decorative segmental pediment
- Fenestration including arched windows flanking main entrance and small central six-pane window below cornice
- Relationship to Victoria Park Heritage Jail Park South Wing
- Registry Office County Administration Wing
- Random-coursed limestone-clad construction of the West and South façades
- Expressed concrete structural frame
- Corner and ribbon windows
- Limestone banding
- Copper-clad boxed cornice
- Two storey entrance with glass curtain wall Caretaker's House
- Historical association with the Courthouse and jail Victoria Park
- Dramatic rise to the east with sloping lawns
- Formal garden beds along entrance from Water Street and the circular garden
- Axial Central walkway and stair leading to the Courthouse
- The physical relationship to the County Courthouse
- Radiating walkways from central fountain
- Central fountain (1951)
- Unobstructed views from Water Street east across Victoria Park to the Courthouse
- Unobstructed views of the north, south and west elevations of the Courthouse from Brock Street, Murray Street, Sheridan Street and College Street
- The sloping lawn up toward the Courthouse including the monumental staircase
- Victoria Park's central East West axis
- Strong urban relationship with the Courthouse



*These sketches show the changing appearance of the courthouse. Top, the original Scoble design. Second, the more classical appearance which also permitted raising the roof in the court room. Third, the design after the central part of the roof was destroyed in the 1916 Quaker fire. ( MacRae, Marion, Cornerstones of order: Courthouses and town halls of Ontario, 1784-1914 )*

#### Interior Elements:

##### Courthouse

- wooden trim, including door and window surrounds, transoms and mouldings and other decorative woodwork associated with the 1840, 1879 and 1917 periods of construction
- Staircases including handrails, newels, balusters, treads and risers associated with the 1840, 1879 and 1917 periods of construction.
- Interior spatial organization of central entrance axis, into the Courthouse, leading to the central stair and intersected by the ground floor north south axis corridor
- Wooden doors with rounded glass panels and decorative arched transoms
- Ceiling details in plaster and wood including flat fields, coffering and crown moulding directly associated with the 1840 and 1917 periods of construction

##### South Wing – County Administration Wing

- Main staircase of South Wing

- Terrazzo floor in geometric black and white pattern
- Exposed walls of original Courthouse building
- Ceiling with lighting in semi-spherical recesses



Court house Park freshly landscaped for the Golden Jubilee of Queen Victoria. Note the Jubilee Tower in the upper right corner. [TVA]

## The Court House Park Forever

ELGIN & KINCARDINE  
PROVINCE OF CANADA

SEAL

VICTORIA by the Grace of God of the United Kingdom of Great BRITAIN and IRELAND, QUEEN, Defender of the Faith: To all to whom these Presents shall come --- GREETING.

KNOW YE, that we, of our special Grace, certain Knowledge and mere motion have given and GRANTED and by these Presents do Give and Grant unto the Council of the District of Colborne their successors and assigns for ever ALL that PARCEL OR TRACT OF LAND situate in the Town of Peterborough in the County of Peterborough in the District of Colborne in our said Province containing by admeasurement three acres be the same more or less being composed of lots numbers one, two and three on the north side of Brock Street east of Water street and lots numbers one, two and three on the south side of Murray Street east of Water street in the said Town of Peterborough, TO HAVE AND TO HOLD the said parcel or tract of land hereby given and granted to the said Council of the District of Colborne their successors and assigns forever IN TRUST solely for a Public Square subject nevertheless to the conditions of enclosing, the planting the same in the said Town of Peterborough TOGETHER with all the Woods and Waters thereon and Waters thereon lying and being under the reservations, limitations and conditions hereinafter



expressed saving nevertheless to our heirs and successors all Mines of Gold and Silver that shall or may be hereafter found on any part of the said parcel or tract of land hereby given and granted as aforesaid; and saving and reserving to us our heirs and successors all white Pine trees that shall or may now or hereafter grow or be growing on any part of the said parcel or tract of land hereby granted as aforesaid.

PROVIDED ALWAYS that no part of the parcel or tract of land hereby given and granted to the said Council and their successors and assigns be within any reservation heretofore made and marked for our us our heirs and successors by our Surveyor General of Woods or his lawful Deputy in which case this Our Grant for such part of the land hereby given and granted to the said Council and their successors and assigns for ever as aforesaid and which shall upon a survey thereof being made be found within any such reservation shall be null and void and of none effect anything herein contained to the contrary notwithstanding.

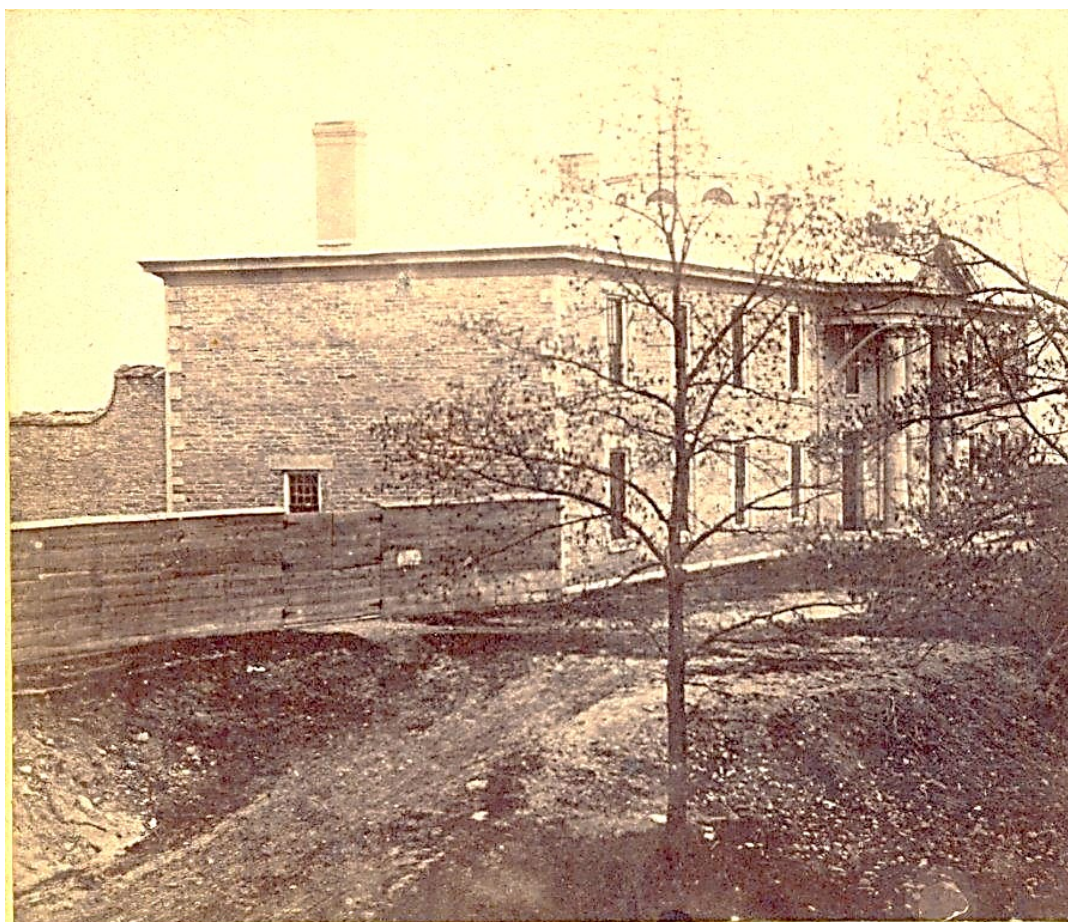
GIVEN under the Great Seal of our Province of Canada WITNESS our Right Trusty and Right Well Beloved Cousin JAMES EARL OF ELGIN AND KINCARDINE Knight of the Most Ancient and Most Noble Order of the Thistle Governor General of British North America and Captain General and Governor in Chief in and over our Provinces of Canada, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and the Island of Prince Edward and Vice Admiral of the same &C &C &C at Montreal this sixteenth day of March in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and forty eight in the eleventh year of our Reign.

By command of His Excellency in Council

“J. W. Sullivan”  
Secy.

A.C. 5<sup>th</sup> Novr. 1847

ELGIN & KINCARDINE  
PROVINCE OF CANADA



Court House 1864, photo by Ewing which was placed in cornerstone. Note the cupola at the top.





Court House, 2011 (Elwood Jones)

## Court House

*Peterborough Examiner, 3 July 1929*

The history of this important building dates back to the second day of June in the year of 1838, when a meeting of the magistrates of the new Colborne district was held in Peterborough at the government school house for the purpose of naming a building committee for the court house and jail.

The Honourable T. A. Stewart M.L.C. was called to the chair and John Darcus, Esq., was appointed as secretary of this important meeting. On subsequent motions the following gentlemen were appointed officers and members of the building committee, of whom three would make a quorum: Hon. Thomas A. Stewart, William H. Wrighton, Edward Duffy, Ephraim Sanford, Robert P. Madge, Edward S. Hickson.

On a motion of C. Moe, Esq., seconded by E. Duffy Esq., the committee was restricted to an expenditure of 4,000 pounds on the new buildings, but subsequently, on the finding that the tenders for the

work, offered agreeably to the plans adopted, exceeded that amount. A second meeting of the magistrates was held, at which on the motion of James Wallis, Esq., seconded by R. Dennistoun, Esq., the Building Committee was empowered to proceed to the extent of 6,000 pounds.

At the first meeting, the magistrates instructed the building committee to direct the Clerk of the Peace of the Newcastle District to add one penny in the pound to the assessment roll of the proposed District of Colborne for that year (1838) pursuant to the act establishing the said District.

The building committee at its second meeting arranged to meet every Friday for the dispatch of business. It also entered into negotiations with several of the provincial banks as well as with private individuals to procure loans of money to carry on the work until the taxes of the district should be available

for that purpose. Some of the sources of these funds were as follows: Commercial Bank, O. Morrow, Hon. John Kirby, Mrs. Elizabeth Fowler, Rev. Francis Kirkpatrick, Hon. Z. Burnham.

The sums procured, lessened as they were by discount and interest, did not suffice for the completion of the buildings, but several of the contractors accepted the Committee's debentures for sums varying from 100 to 1,000 pounds and these as they were matured were met by taxes levied on the new district in subsequent years.

In a short time plans and specifications for the new buildings were submitted to the committee by Joseph Scobell and Walter Sheridan. That of the former met with the most favor and was awarded the first prize while Mr. Sheridan's entitled him to the second prize. The Hon. T. A. Stewart was delegated to proceed to Toronto and submit the plans to the Chief Justice who confirmed the decision of the committee. Some alteration in minor details to the plans were adopted, which occasioned an additional outlay and which exceeded the sum that had been stipulated as the committee's limit but the magistrates endorsed its proceedings as well as did the public.

The tenders of Messrs Thomas Harper and D. Bletcher for 800 cords of stone at 14s. 9d. each was accepted, provided they furnish all quarried stone.

On the 21<sup>st</sup> day of August 1838 John Reid, Esq., P.L.S. reported to the committee in reference to a survey of the government appropriation of ground which consists in all of seven acres, lots 5, 6, and 7 of which would be required for the intended buildings.

The foundation had not been excavated and the grounds were still covered with bush and trees when it became known that His Excellency Sir George Arthur, Lieut. Governor of Upper Canada, was about to visit Peterborough. As it was desirable that the foundation stone be laid by so distinguished a personage, Mr. Scobell was requested to open six feet of ground and to have placed on the spot one load of stone so the ceremony could be performed. The chairman was instructed to solicit this favour through His Excellency's secretary on his arrival and should he consent, the Rev. C. T. Wade was to be requested to offer a short blessing on the success of the undertaking.

#### **An Early Start**

His Excellency cheerfully consented, but his time was limited so the committee met at its room at 6:30 in the morning of the 25<sup>th</sup> of August 1838, waited upon the governor at 7 and at 7:30 His Excellency and suite accompanied by the building committee proceeded to the ground and in the presence of

numerous spectators laid the corner stone of the new buildings. The Reverence Mr. Wade also offered an impressive and appropriate prayers.

The following articles were placed by His Excellency beneath the stone in the foundation of the southwest corner: A parchment scroll telling of the dedication, the names of the building committee, a British shilling of the reign of George IV, 1829, a sixpence, a penny and a half penny of the reign of William IV. The lettering of the scroll was executed in elegant styles by our townsman, Ivan O'Beirne.

Tenders were received from time to time for the erection and completion of several parts of the court house building and jail, the entire cost of which, including alterations and extra work amounting to over 7,000 pounds.

During the progress of the work, meetings of the magistrates of the proposed district were several times held to advise with and assist the committee. Towards the close of the work Ephraim Sanford was appointed treasurer of the committee in place of Mr. Duffy who had removed from the province; and D. Griffith Esq., was appointed a member of the building committee.

The walls and the roof of the court house and jail were complete in 1839, and the work on the interior of the building completed when the building was handed over to the committee by E. Chamberlain on 16<sup>th</sup> of November 1840, but it was not finally accepted by the committee until the following May [1841].

The jail was not entirely finished until the summer of 1842 [1841], owing to a deficit in the written agreement, by which the contractor, Edward Lee, claimed that the plastering was not included in the contract; and the season of 1841 [1840] was so far advanced when this became known, that the plastering of the jail had to be deferred until the following spring. [The plastering might have been finished in the summer of 1841.]

[The letters patent were issued 9 December 1841. Wilson S. Conger moved to Peterborough after being appointed sheriff of the Colborne District on 22 Dec. 1841, serving until 1856.]

At length on 27<sup>th</sup> of December, 1841, and after three years of arduous duty, the building committee was finally relieved of its task. At a meeting of the magistrates held that day, its accounts were examined and declared correct and a vote of thanks was tendered to the gentlemen composing the building committee, to the treasurer and the secretary for their indefatigable exertions in carrying the object of their appointment to completion.

## Backwoods of Canada

Introduction by Elwood H. Jones  
Catharine Parr Traill

As a guest on the Global Peterborough Morning Show with Teresa Kasuba, 8 March, for International Women's Day, I chose three women that embodied a sense of accomplishment: Charlotte Nicholls, Catharine Parr Traill and Alene Holt. Charlotte Nicholls was a philanthropist, Traill, an author and Holt, a politician. Each had accomplished much. Each also had the respect of the men in their worlds, but their success was built on a network of support from women.

Charlotte Nicholls had been active with the Protestant Home where she saw first hand the need for a hospital in Peterborough. By 1882 she funded the establishment of what became the Nicholls Hospital, forerunner of Peterborough Civic Hospital and the current Peterborough Regional Health Centre. She also established our first system of parks: Jackson Park, Nicholls Oval and Inverlea Park. The hospital funding lasted until the 1940s and the parks funding to the 1960s.

Catharine Parr Traill wrote several books, but my favourites after all these years remain *Backwoods of Canada* (1836); *Canadian Crusoes* (1853-54); and *Studies of Plant Life I Canada: Gleanings from Forest, Lake and Plain* (1884-1885).

Alene Holt, whose scrapbooks are at Trent Valley Archives, document some of her accomplishments. She was a tireless organizer ever on top of details as was evident in her management and innovations for the 7<sup>th</sup> Victory Loan Campaign during World War II. She was part of the Canadian delegation to the United Nations in 1960. Her career in municipal politics, 1953-1976, a record at the time for longevity, was capped by her brief term in 1962 as Peterborough's first woman mayor.

I have written about each of the three in columns for the Examiner and for the Heritage Gazette. Traill and I were both inducted on the Peterborough Pathway of Fame in 1998, its first edition, as writers. As I reflected on past events at Trent Valley Archives I recalled the exceptional 2012 in-town bus tour, "Summer of '32" which was inspired by a fresh reading of *Backwoods of Canada*. The heart of the book, initially a collection of 18 letters written for her mother, is letter 6, which Catharine Parr Traill wrote from Peterborough. Her Canadian life was largely defined by her months in Peterborough while waiting for the land to be arranged, which was a lake property north of her brother Samuel's place, near what emerged in the 1850s as Lakefield.

Here she began her writing, her fascination with Canadian plants and her observations on emigrant experiences, including this year of the cholera epidemic. These experiences included meeting emigrants from the United States and Britain and observing attitudes towards class and the importance of work. Most interesting as well, the letter contains a fascinating description of Peterborough in 1832. Following is an excerpt from Letter VI, pages 80 to 106, dated from Peterborough 11 September 1832.

My copy of *Backwoods of Canada* is a first edition, second printing, which was volume 28 in the Library of Entertaining Knowledge, and published by Charles Knight, 22 Ludgate Street, London. In this edition, Traill is identified only as "the wife of an emigrant officer."

### Some Account of Peterborough 1832

[page 86] But it is now time I should give you some account of Peterborough, which, in point of situation, is superior to any place I have yet seen in the Upper Province. It occupies a central point between the townships of Monaghan Smith, Cavan, Otonabee and Douro, and may with propriety be considered as the capital of the Newcastle district.

It is situated on a fine elevated plain, just above the small lake, where the river is divided by two low wooded islets. The original or government part of the town is laid out in half-acre lots; the streets, which are now fast filling up, are nearly at right angles with the river, and extend towards the plains to the north-east. These plains form a beautiful natural park, finely diversified with hill and dale, covered with a lovely green sward, enamelled with a variety of the most exquisite flowers, and planted, as if by Nature's own hand,

with groups of feathery pines, oaks, balsam, poplar and silver birch. The views from these plains are delightful; whichever way you turn your eyes you are gratified by a diversity of hill and dale, wood and water, with the town spreading over a considerable tract of ground.

The plains descend with a deep declivity towards the river, which rushes with considerable impetuosity between its banks. Fancy a long, narrow valley [89] and separating the east and west portions of the town into two distinct villages.

The Otonabee bank rises to a loftier elevation than the Monaghan side, and commands an extensive view over the intervening valley, the opposite town, and the boundary forest and hills behind it: this is called Peterborough East, and is in the hands of two or three individuals of large capital, from whom the town lots are purchased.

Peterborough thus divided covers a great extent of ground, more than sufficient for the formation of a large city. The number of inhabitants are now reckoned at seven hundred



and upwards, and if it continues to increase as rapidly in the next few years as it has done lately, it will soon be a very populous town. [\*Since this account of Peterborough was written, the town has increased at least a third in buildings and population.]

There is great water-power, both as regards the river and the fine broad creek which winds its way through the town, and falls into the small lake below. There are several saw and grist-mills, a distillery, fulling-mill, two principal inns, besides smaller ones, a number of good stores, a government school-house, which also serves for a church, till one more suitable should be built. The plains are sold off in park lots, and some pretty little dwellings are being built, but I much fear the natural beauties of this lovely spot will be soon spoiled.

I am never weary with strolling about, climbing the hills in every direction, to catch some new prospect [90], or gather some new flowers, which though getting late in the summer, are still abundant...

On Sunday I went to church; the first opportunity I had had of attending public worship since I was in the Highlands of Scotland; and surely I had reason to bow my knees in thankfulness to that merciful God who had brought us through the perils of the great deep and horrors of the pestilence.

Never did our beautiful Liturgy seem so touching and impressive as it did that day, -- offered up in our lowly log-built church in the wilderness.

This simple edifice is situated at the foot of a gentle slope on the plains, surrounded by groups of oaks and feathery pines, which, though inferior in point of size to the huge pines and oaks of the forest, are far more agreeable to the eye, branching out in a variety of fantastic forms. The turf here is of an emerald greenness; in short, it is a sweet spot, retired from the noise and bustle of the town, a fitting place in which to worship God in spirit and in truth.

There are many beautiful walks towards the Smith town hills, and along the banks that overlook the river. The summit of this ridge is sterile, and is thickly set with loose blocks of red and grey granite, interspersed with large masses of limestone scattered in every direction; they are mostly smooth and rounded, as if by the action of water. As they are detached, and merely occupy the surface of the ground, it seemed strange to me how they came at that elevation. A geologist would doubtless be able to solve the mystery in a few minutes. The oaks that grow on this high bank are rather larger and more flourishing than those in the valleys and more fertile portions of the soil.

Behind the town, in the direction of the Cavan and Emily roads, is a wide space which I call the "squatters' ground," it being entirely covered with shanties, in which the poor emigrants, commuted pensioners, and the like, have located themselves and families. Some remain here under the ostensible reason of providing a shelter for their wives and children till they have prepared a house for their reception on their respective grants; but not unfrequently it happens that they are too indolent, or really unable to work on their lots, often situated many miles in the backwoods, and in distant and unsettled townships, presenting great obstacles to the poor emigrants, which it requires more energy and courage to encounter than is possessed by a vast number of them. Others, of idle and profligate habits, spend the money they received,

and sell the land, for which they gave away their pensions, after which they remain miserable squatters on the shanty ground.

The shanty is a sort of primitive hut in Canadian architecture, and is nothing more than a shed built of logs, the clinks between the round edges of the timbers being filled with mud, moss, and bits of wood; the roof is frequently composed of logs split and hollowed with the axe, and placed side by side, so that the edges rest on each other; the concave and convex surfaces being alternately uppermost, every other log forms a channel to carry off the rain and melting snow. The eaves of this building resemble the scalloped [94] edges of a clam shell; but rude as this covering is, it effectively answers the purpose of keeping the interior dry; far more so than the roofs formed of bark or boards, through which the rain will find entrance. Sometimes, the shanty has a window, sometimes only an open doorway; which admits the light and lets out the smoke. A rude chimney, which is often nothing better than an opening cut in one of the top logs above the hearth, a few boards fastened in a square form, serves as the vent for the smoke; the only precaution against the fire catching the log walls behind the hearth being a few large stones, placed in a half circular form, or more commonly a bank of dry earth raised against the wall.

Nothing can be more comfortless than some of these shanties, reeking with smoke and dirt, the common receptacle for children, pigs, and fowls. But I have given you the dark side of the picture; I am happy to say all the shanties on the squatters' ground were not like these; on the contrary, by far the larger proportion were inhabited by tidy folks, and had one, or [97] even two small windows, and a clay chimney regularly built up through the roof; some were even roughly floored, and possessed similar comforts with the small log-houses.

You will, perhaps, think it strange when I assure you that many respectable settlers, with their wives and families, persons delicately nurtured, and accustomed to every comfort before they came hither, have been contented to inhabit a hut of this kind during the first or second year of their settlement in the woods.

...

[105] This seems to be the general complaint with all classes; the women are discontented and unhappy. Few enter with their whole heart into a settler's life. They miss the little domestic comforts they had been used to enjoy; they regret the friends and relations they left in the old country; and they cannot endure the loneliness of the backwoods.

This prospect does not discourage me; I know I shall find plenty of occupation within-doors, and I have sources of enjoyment when I walk abroad that will keep me from being dull. Besides, have I not a right to be cheerful, and contented for the sake of my beloved partner? The change is not greater for me than him; and if for his sake I have voluntarily left home, and friends, and country, shall I therefore sadden him by useless regrets? I am always inclined to subscribe to that sentiment of my favourite poet, Goldsmith, -- "Still to ourselves in every place consigned, / Our own felicity we make or find." But I shall very soon be put to the test, as we leave this town tomorrow by ten o'clock....

## A STORY FROM THE OLD PHOTO ALBUM

### Mack and Alma McCallum

*Ken Brown*

Every family seems to have one. A photo album with old familiar friends and memories that speak confidently and eloquently to us, but also contains quiet and unfulfilling images of barely known, even unknown faces peering tentatively towards the lens. Who are those other people? What were their lives like?

Peterborough's Brownscombe family photo album features many images that easily provoke thoughts of local times gone by, because the family was publicly engaged in Peterborough and Stony Lake activities. Patriarch William Brownscombe, the first town potter from 1850 is seen posing behind his potter's wheel at his early home and business location, lot 2 south Murray st west of George. Looking beyond the album, an employment letter and his obit tell us he had a sixteen-year stint as the town's lockmaster. A newspaper story gives a hint of what that life was like. Lumberman Dalton Ullyot wanted to get his logs downriver to not conflict with Otonabee navigation. He was onsite at the lock personally at 4 a.m. to get that task done by 7 a.m. So was lockmaster Brownscombe and his crew.

Most of us don't start work at 4 a.m.

Census records disclose that William Brownscombe was a "farmer". Newspaper ads tell us more: a nursery keeper with 24 varieties of apple trees on offer. He was a North Monaghan politician, and builder of what was thought to be the third cottage on Stony Lake in 1886. He was an Orange Master, co-founder of two Bible Christian churches, and, once again, the newspapers tell us more: towards the end of his life he served as a steward at Charlotte st Methodist with Peterborough's two most significant town-builders, George Cox and James Stevenson. Lots of "William" information is available. His family peruse the album and memorabilia and feel like they "know" that man.

William's son Felix was similarly publicly engaged as founder of a canoe-building company, city treasurer, and secretary-treasurer of many organizations from the Little Lake Cemetery Company to Stony Lake cottagers. His family "knows" the man behind his photo images as well.

The same is true for Felix's daughter Leta. She was a career executive secretary of the local YWCA when that organization was the hub of young women's life in town. Until her death in 1960, she was a formidable local presence. In 1974, in my early

accounting days in town, I asked an older woman bookkeeper on my staff if she knew Leta Brownscombe. She assured me that every woman of a certain age knew "Miss Brownscombe at the Y". And half of them had been to her cottage on Stony Lake. In the 1980s the YWCA established its "Women of the Year" award in Leta's name. In 1989 the Milroy Drive co-op housing project similarly was named for her.

The family knows these publicly accessible parts of these Brownscombe lives through three generations, and the album photos stir those actual and learned memories. But what to make of the portraits taken in 1893 of a man and woman in Chilli\*\*cothe, Mo? Sadly, nothing. But surely something must be known of this handsome young couple shown in portraits by Peterborough's own P. H. Green studio? Written on them is "Alma and Mack".



Alexander C “Mack” McCallum, was born in May 1867, and grew up a city boy among the shipyards near the river Clyde in suburban Glasgow. His father Peter was by trade a “building joiner”. Peter had his eldest child Alex and two daughters by a first wife, and after being widowed, three more children by second wife Agnes, formerly a “domestic servant”. By age 14, Alex was already at work as an office boy for land agents. Later in 1881, he began mechanical work as an apprentice with the Chas. Connal Co. and then the Fairfield Shipbuilding Co, in Glasgow. He then advanced through the local Singer Sewing Machine Company, and the Hyde Park Locomotive works. Although he later referred to himself as ME (mechanical engineer), I could not find him in engineering graduate listings of the prestigious Scottish universities. Apart from that useful diploma in Naval Architecture from the Kensington Schools, London, he went to a different “school”. Alex learned both the drawing/design side and the shop side of heavy industrial manufacturing on the job in the UK.

Back in Glasgow from a year long voyage on a City Line steamer to Calcutta at the end of 1887, he was ready for new adventures. He had relatives in Canada, and a search determined that the William Hamilton Company in Peterborough, owned by an old Scotch Presbyterian family would be happy to employ a bright young Scotch Presbyterian with experience in heavy industrial equipment design and manufacture. In an 1897 lecture on “Engineering Education”, the Peterborough CGE assistant chief of staff explained that in those days, many business owners preferred engineers “who received their training outside of college walls in the hard school of practical experience”. “Old Willie”, William Hamilton senior, would have been one of those owners. In May 1888 Alex McCallum left his Glasgow family and sailed to Canada.

Until the arrival of the Edison works in 1891, the William Hamilton company was by far the largest industrial machine shop/foundry/heavy equipment manufacturer in Peterborough, with factories occupying several acres around Reid and Murray streets. Its products included water turbines, engines, lumber mill and mining equipment that were sold across the country.

Why Peterborough for Alex? A clue comes from the 1891 Peterborough census. Alex was then 24 years old, living in a townhouse, 141 London street between Water and George. The head of the household is another Alex McCallum, ten years older, who calls himself a lumber merchant with 20 employees. His wife, his widowed mother, and his *cousin*, our 24-year-old Alex, complete the household.

What do we know about the other half of “Mack and Alma”, Alex’s future wife, Miss Alma Brownscombe? Well, it could be argued that she was a “farm girl”. Despite owning the Murray street property (behind the old YMCA) with its various buildings from 1852, her father William Brownscombe’s family lived most of the time from the late 1850s at their “homestead” in North Monaghan, running from the Otonabee river to Park street along Braidwood avenue. This was bush and farm country then. Typical of the day, activities of the young men in town received more newspaper comment than the women. But there was one Examiner tidbit about Alma. In the mid-1880s she enjoyed a coming-of-age adventure: Late in the summer, the newspaper reported: “Miss Brownscombe left by Grand Trunk Railway, today, for Port Hope, where she will take the steamer for a trip through the Thousand Islands and Hudson River. She will visit in New York and Pennsylvania, and expects to be absent until Christmas.” Alma’s purpose was to visit the younger cousin of her father William, nationally acclaimed American artist Jennie Brownscombe (1850-1936), who lived and worked both in Pennsylvania and the Hudson Valley.

Alex McCallum, the Glasgow city boy, embraced Peterborough and the related outdoor life. Early on he experienced a summer steamboat trip with his same-age co-worker William Hamilton junior to the new Hamilton family cottage property on Stony Lake: Dummer Island one. Stony Lake was just then opening to cottagers, but for more than two decades it had been a camper’s paradise. Alex joined that outdoor camping world, and then with two friends decided to buy his own camp. In August 1891 he, future furrier Tom Barrie, and future senior banker John Crane purchased a cottage and two plus acre Island 26, for \$300 from the local “Cruiser” steamboat captain Benjamin Eden who had returned temporarily to Quebec. Three 25- year-old Peterborough men in search of outdoor pleasures and the social life around Juniper Island just to the south, bought a wilderness retreat before acquiring a home.

Time passed, and at the end of June 1893, Alex McCallum married an older (by two years) local woman, one Alma Brownscombe, at her then family home, 163 Murray street Peterborough, two blocks south of where Alex resided. How did “Mack and Alma” come about? The meeting would not have been at church. Brownscombes were fervent Methodists. McCallum was a Presbyterian.

Perhaps there was a family introduction. Maybe on the shop floor at the Hamilton company an older Scotsman, machinist William Borland



picked Mack to meet his niece Alma.

Perhaps Miss Alma Brownscombe was introduced by Alex's Oddfellow lodge brothers, Robert McWhinnie and Felix Brownscombe, her brother-in-law and brother respectively.

Maybe, on 14 June 1891, Alma took a walk across the Hunter street bridge to enjoy an evening of baseball at Riverside Park. She might have watched the two William Hamilton Company teams play. Her eye was drawn to the handsome right fielder for the "Evan's nine" who, according to the newspaper account, scored two runs. And she walked back across the bridge with that young man, charmed by his Scottish brogue, part of which she could understand. Maybe, somewhere between 1888 and 1892, when Alex taught night classes at the Mechanics Institute, Alma enrolled in his Mechanical Engineering course.



*Felix Brownscombe's first cottage, Brownscombe Island. Photo by Homer Fisk, 1894.*

*From left is Felix's wife Carrie, his son Ernie, his niece Ethel Goodfellow, his brother-in-law Alex McCallum with moustache, and one of Alex's cottage partners, Tom Barrie, seated at right. Beside Alex is Eddie Bamfield. Brownscombe niece Effie McWhinnie is in front of him.*

Most likely the Mack and Alma introduction would have occurred at the Stony Lake community. Alma

Brownscombe's family had camped at the lake since the early 1860s, and had their own cottage on island 3 from August 1886. "The lake" was a social place then... evening concerts, campfires, Sunday church services. And everyone arrived together. Most of Stony lake's mainland was heavily lumbered inaccessible bush farms. No roads, and shoreline too shallow for steamboat landing. Cottages were built on the islands. The Peterborough to Lakefield GTR met the Stony Lake steamboats that then distributed their passengers among the islands. Inevitably Alma would have encountered the extroverted Mack and his cottage partners on the train or steamboat. Mack, recently an ocean-going steamboat engineer, would undoubtedly have sometimes been found on deck with the Captain, explaining to him what to do about that knock in the engine.

However, they first became a team, Alex, known to the family as "Mack", and "Am" were set

to be married in her parents' then Murray street home in June 1893. Unhappily, her father William took ill, and died there on 18 June 1893.

The wedding went ahead ten days later. The young immigrant Scotsman, five years off the boat, had married into the third generation of an established Peterborough family. He had new "connections". And, as it turned out, so did the

Brownscombe family. Later that year, Alex's brother-in-law Felix's struggling Canadian Canoe company needed more shareholder money and management skill. It was Alex's friends who supplied that. In a small way, both John Crane and Tom Barrie participated. In a more significant way, new company president Homer Fisk brought his money and management skills. Many years later that same Mack network was again at work for the Brownscombes. Felix's son Ernie, then marking time working in his

father's city treasurer's office, needed career direction. It was John Crane, then manager of the Ontario Bank who introduced young Ernie to what became a career life in banking.

Because of William Brownscombe's untimely death, the young couple's future took a turn. William's widow, Mary Anne, was in fragile health (chronic bronchitis) and needed support. The newlyweds moved in to live with her at 163 Murray street until her death 25 March 1900. Alma's older brother Felix and his family were already renting the adjacent 165 Murray street home from the William Brownscombe estate for \$7 per month. Mack and Alma's rent was the same for 163 Murray, less \$7 for boarding Mary Anne.



*Brownscombe family homes, 163-65 Murray street. The verandah steps are located where the steps for the Murray street entrance to the former YMCA addition were subsequently built. An apartment complex is currently located there.*



*Mary Ann Brownscombe, mother of Alma McCallum. Photo taken at 163 Murray street by Mack, 1898*

So married life went on for seven years. In 1896

the YMCA was constructed next door. A son, Hector was born in August 1897. Sixteen months later, he died.

On a happier front, Alma also gave birth to daughters Madeleine in 1894 and Jean on 17 July 1899, one day before her sister-in-law Carrie Brownscombe gave birth to her son Minto next door. One can picture the two sisters-in-law rocking their babies together on the big front porches.

Alex was clearly a thoughtful, engaged man. He was a joiner, of a different sort than his father. Early on, the factory shop manager, Andrew MacFarlane, introduced him to the Oddfellows Lodge and 170 new "brothers". They met every Monday evening in their hall on the upper floor, 435 George and Hunter. At some point Alex also engaged with two additional fraternal organizations. A similar number of "Foresters" met in their George street hall on the first and third Fridays of a month. And he became a Mason with the AF and AM. More meetings with "brothers".

St. Paul's Church introduced him to other young men including good friend Homer Fisk. Homer also had arrived in Peterborough at age 21 in 1888 as a young bachelor and also joined St. Paul's church. He and Alex sang bass in the St. Paul's choir, conducted by young organist John Crane. Fisk was also an engineer, the university-educated version, and managed the local electric utility. It was his job to electrify the town. Apart from the choir at St. Paul's, Alex joined the Young Men's Guild and served as a church librarian. It is unclear ~~to me~~ what that involved, but when Alex eventually left town, the other *four* librarians thanked him with a gift bible for his inspiration. As a recent Scots immigrant who undoubtedly proved his heritage every time he opened his mouth, Alex enthusiastically joined in St. Andrews Society banquets, standing up and toasting whatever needed toasting with what the newspapers called on one occasion, "a happy little speech".

Alex was invited to be an early, perhaps founding member of the Fortnightly Club. In 1895 this auspicious group of men met fortnightly to hear and discuss each other's papers. Alex rubbed elbows there with Collegiate principal Cortez Fessenden, who also wrote physics texts and could speak of watching a 4 August 1876 exhibition of the early telephone on the Bell farm. And third generation local lawyer Max Dennistoun could recount with Reverend Herbert Symonds (son-in-law of Mossom Boyd), family tales of 1830s pioneering on the lakes near Fenelon Falls. There was Sheriff Hall and his lawyer brother Harry who could share reflections about the goings on of brother-in-law Sanford Fleming and Harry's most auspicious client, Charlotte Nicholls. Harry had also recently been a key player in bringing the Edison



Company to town. MOH Dr. John Clarke could share stories of the challenge of finally getting a sewer system in town. These were auspicious community men. Mack, the youngest of the group, an outsider with the least formal education, happily held his own. Club secretary Hampden Burnham acknowledged in one report: "The discussion was brought to a close by Mr. McCallum in his usual fluid manner."

Alex was not at all shy about speaking his mind. Reverend Symonds, soon to be principal of Trinity College, spoke on November 26, 1895 on the topic of "Christian Socialism". Alex was then immediately on his feet to explain how the church had utterly failed the poor. From February 1895 the Club had provided a weekly column to the Saturday Examiner. It was anonymously edited on behalf of various anonymous club writers and the club expressed no responsibility for its content. On 11 January 1896 the Examiner published ~~we find there~~ the first of three columns on the subject of "the church in relation to the Working Classes". The anonymous author was likely Alex McCallum with much more to say on that subject than he had expressed at the November club meeting.

Alex delivered the next Fortnightly club lecture on the subject of "Mechanical Absurdities". One of these was the concept of perpetual motion. Another he had doubts about was "flying machines". Alex reached the conclusion that "a weight of somewhere about 10 to 12 pounds per horsepower for the machinery of propulsion must be worked, if success is to be either certain ~~of~~ or satisfactory in this particular detail of the problem of successful flying machines; otherwise we must ever concede that flying machines are simply "mechanical absurdities"." A few years later, a summary of his talk on "Ancient Engineering" filled the best part of a page in the Peterborough Review. His thesis was that historians who focused on the warriors and fighting men were missing the true greatness of ancient days, the achievements of engineers and architects.

Congregations of men met for their mutual society and earnest discussion of all kinds. There were then in Peterborough eight orders of Masons, five of Oddfellows, five of the Orange Order, and countless church groups. When the Fortnightly Club held an open meeting in late 1895, the *Examiner* reported that "there was a large attendance, representing the best social element and culture of the town." Even the paddlers liked to talk. Members of the Canoe club would meet off-season weekly in the gymnasium above their boathouse at the foot of King street for debates: Resolved, that womanhood suffrage is not desirable. Resolved, that morality increases with civilization. And debate at the Fortnightly? Resolved:

Chinese labourers should be excluded from the Dominion of Canada.

Alex was similarly engaged on a professional basis. The third annual convention of the Canadian Electrical Association was held 12-14 September 1893 at the Toronto Industrial Exhibition grounds. Fifty-one members assembled from Guelph, Ottawa, Berlin, Kingston, Vancouver, Montreal, Edmonton and Toronto. Some were technical men. Some, like Frederic Nicholls and Harvey Dwight, frequent partners of Peterborough expatriate George Cox, were upper-level industry businessmen, out to network, to see what was new, and who was doing it. Peterborough was represented at this event by McCallum, Homer Fisk, and Bell manager John Knapman. Fisk and J. W. Taylor from Peterborough had been at the association's founding meeting two years earlier, and Fisk had presented on "electric light carbons" in 1892. In 1893 McCallum delivered and defended his paper on the afternoon of the opening day. The *Canadian Electrical News* reported that "AC McCallum, writer of the able paper on Water Wheels at the Electrical convention last month is chief of the draughting office of the William Hamilton Manufacturing Company Ltd. Mr. McCallum's paper evoked a great deal of discussion and his answers to the numerous questions put to him showed that he knew exactly what he was talking about." The convention also gave Alex an opportunity for professional networking. In the midst of the lectures, the group travelled by boat and train to Niagara Falls to tour the power plant.

Three months later, the name of A. C. McCallum ME again appeared in the *Canadian Electrical News*. In a long letter, he declared that he had been much interested in the journal's recent correspondence on the subject of engines for electrical work, and he was "at present deeply engaged in the study of the various forms of slow and high-speed engines now upon the market. As a designer of steam plants, I feel that I should like to take a part in the discussion." And at some length, he did, including an explanation as to why the long stroke engine was not as desirable as the short stroke for incandescent lighting.

Also that summer, the newly formed Canadian Association of Stationary Engineers [CASE] established a Peterborough Branch. S. Potter, the chief engineer of the Canadian General Electric company, served as first president and A. C. McCallum as secretary of the group which met the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month. Later that year, in December 1894 Mack delivered a series of "interesting and instructive" lectures to the Peterborough branch of CASE about "the steam engine indicator". "Brother



McCallum” represented the branch at the Ottawa convention in 1895.

In May 1895 he joined the Canadian Society of Civil Engineers and his writings appeared in other professional journals. The *Peterborough Review* reported that “the last number of ‘the Canadian Engineer’ contains a detailed description of the pumping plant of the Peterborough Water Co, manufactured by the William Hamilton Company. The article is ably written by Mr. AC McCallum, engineer of the company, and is amply illustrated. Mr. McCallum also contributes to the same number of the Engineer as well an article on “The Indicator and its Use.” Mr. McCallum, though young in his profession, is rapidly pushing to the front rank. He is not a mere draughtsman, he is a student, and that fact explains the success he is achieving.” In the pumping plant article, Alex notes that the (many) illustrations “are copied from the designs for the plant, prepared by the writer.” He was just 28 years old.

It seems that the William Hamilton company itself, now 40 years old, was thriving in the late 1890s, shipping their products across the country: January 1897: a boiler of the locomotive type, 25 feet x 6 feet for the new steamer of the Columbia and Kootenay Steam Navigation Co. June 1897: two pair of “Boss” turbine water wheels to the Fraser river. May 1898: two items: the entire equipment of a sawmill being erected at Cool creek, 60 miles west of Fort McLeod, NWT. “The entire plant comes from the Hamilton shops, including a battery of 6 boilers, bandsaws etc.” And “the engines for a large stern-wheel steamer, for Vancouver. The wheel is 39 feet in diameter with buckets 9 feet long...”

In March 1899, Alex, William Hamilton junior, and the company’s Vancouver sales agent rode the train to the Windsor Hotel in Montreal where Mack made a presentation to the Canadian Mining Institute, of which he was a member. His subject was “the designing and construction of metallurgical machinery.” Three of the 35 presentations over three days were enhanced by the progressive inclusion of “lantern slide”

illustrations. Alex’s was one of them.

In May 1899 he became a member of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers.

At work, his status continuously improved. He was variously referred to as a draughtman, an engineer, a designer of steam power plants and water turbines, and for a time, “responsible for erection of outside work”. This could have been erection of an entire lumber mill, perhaps in northern Quebec, or most anywhere in British Columbia where the William Hamilton Company dominated the marketplace.

On a personal level, Mack happily continued as an avid cottage outdoorsman. He and John Crane left island 26 to Robert Neil in 1896. Crane located elsewhere on the lake. Now married into the Brownscombe family, Mack moved further up towards Burleigh. “Brownscombe Island” in Stony lake was broken into four parcels around 1890. Alma’s older brother Felix paid \$20 for the east-end lot. The William Brownscombe/ Robert McWhinnie (second husband of eldest daughter Tillie) cottage was next door. Mack and Alma acquired the middle lot next to that for \$30 in 1896 and built a handsome two-story cottage. The west end of the island was sold to second cousin Joe Yelland.



*Alma and Alex McCallum cottage on Brownscombe Island, Stony Lake, c1900. Seated lower left are Alex, daughter Jean, and Alma. Seated one step higher at right is sister-in-law Carrie Brownscombe holding son Minto. Alma's mother, Mary Ann Brownscombe dressed in black, is behind.*

Felix Brownscombe and his two brothers-in-law, McWhinnie and McCallum, were all active in Stony Lake cottager association meetings, as were some of Mack's fortnightly club "brothers", the Halls and David Dumble from at least April 1897. A meeting at that time weighed in on many issues. The proposed licensing of a hotel at McCracken's Landing was considered "detrimental". A possible pavilion at Juniper for religious services was not. Support for a new summer hotel on the lake was denied. Creation of a committee to pursue better rail/steamboat connections was approved, as was a by-law against shooting coons and one to somehow regulate the sanitary conditions of the resort. And of course, there was unanimous support for protesting the "exorbitant taxation" of cottage lands by Burleigh township. In later years, the association even attempted to have the Stony Lake island community declared a separate township as a remedy for this malady.

When her mother died in 1900, Alma McCallum was freed from responsibility for her care. Brother Felix inherited the two Murray street houses. He bumped the rent at 163 Murray to \$9 a month. Mack and Alma relocated to a new rental location, 546 Aylmer street just north of McDonnell. Their new landlords were her sister Tillie and brother-in-law Robert McWhinnie. In its day, this was a handsome house, a sister of the home next door long occupied until recently by the reverend Don Howson. That summer they holidayed in Chicago.

The next summer Mack took Alma, Madeleine and their two young nieces to visit Britain, the family's only brief glimpse of his first life and family.

Perhaps Alex's final lecture performance in Peterborough took place in November 1902. He spoke to his fellow members of the St. Paul's church young men's guild on the subject "How to draw a straight line". In early 1903, Mack and Alma decided to move on from Peterborough. He had served with the Hamilton Company for 14 years as chief draughtsman, works engineer, and "manager of erections". Perhaps working life at the Hamilton company had changed after the death of "Old Willie" in 1902. Perhaps he had frustrations with its old school approach. His predecessor's memoirs stated that his new shop in Milwaukee "was larger and slightly more systematically conducted than the Hamilton's, which was faint praise". Perhaps Toronto was the only place offering upward mobility for Mack's ambitions. Early in 1903 Mack took on work with the Canada Foundry company in Toronto, first in charge of the draughting room, and then as assistant superintendent. Fred Nicholls, long-time CGE owner and manager

who had attended Mack's 1893 turbine lecture was an owner that year. The McCallum family lived at 90 Hazleton Lane, equidistant from the old Front street factory and the newly built property to the west which became the CGE Davenport works. Felix Brownscombe's diary reported on a visit by his wife Carrie and her three children to sister Alma's Toronto home for three days and noted the important (money) details. "Two full and two half train tickets \$9.65. Eight meals at Simpsons, \$1.20."

Felix and his son visited again in September and the McCallums were back with him for an extended Christmas visit. Clearly the young families were close.

But all was not well with Alex. Tuberculosis that had killed baby Hector, now afflicted him. By the spring of 1904 Mack could no longer manage his Toronto factory working life and returned to Stony Lake for the summer. There was hope that a better climate might serve him well. On 1 September 1904, the family headed out by train to Pasadena, California. Alex had found work there, once again vaguely described as being a "draughtsman" for an extraordinarily exciting project. He joined the founding staff of the Mount Wilson observatory, who were building the largest and most significant solar observation facility in the world high in the mountains just north of Pasadena. By summer 1905, Mack's health was further in decline. On July 5 he returned to Stony lake for a final few weeks. On August 5, the



family left on the train to return to Pasadena.

*Mack, seated at left waiting for the steamboat to arrive at Brownscombe Island, August 1905*

On September 22 brother-in-law Felix shipped their furniture out to California. Mack died there on September 23.

Felix and wife Carrie were sent his cremated remains which they buried in Little Lake Cemetery. Alma never saw Peterborough or Ontario again.

The next summer, Felix sold Alma's Brownscombe Island cottage to Ben Yelland, Joe's twin brother, for \$600, and sent her the money. The summer after, he sold Mack's shares of "Hockey Rink Stock" for \$20 and wired the money.

Alma moved out of her rented premises on North Lake Avenue in Pasadena and purchased a home on the next street, 546 North Summit Avenue, a few blocks east of the future Rose Bowl stadium. It was a simple, attractive craftsman home. And that is where she stayed.

In another family challenge, her daughter Madeleine died in Pasadena in 1914. She was 20 years old. Her cremated remains were shipped to Peterborough. Felix and his wife Carrie buried them in the family plot on Little Lake. Alma stayed on in California.

In the spring of 1920 Felix recorded that his older sister Tillie and daughter Ethel had an extended visit to Alma in Pasadena. Felix, the accountant, did not record in his diary how his younger sister was or what the house and Pasadena were like. He noted that Tillie had paid half the expenses and that Alma had refused any rent. Further, that she was about to sell her house for \$6,200.

U.S. census records show that Alma owned her Pasadena home mortgage-free, and was not working. She became a naturalized US citizen in 1919 and died in Pasadena in 1923, age 51. On 25 March 1923 Felix received a telegram from Alma's Pasadena neighbour telling of Alma's sudden passing. Felix then sent a telegram to his niece Jean expressing condolences and inviting her to come to Peterborough to live with he, Carrie, and daughter Leta. Jean had lived in Canada for 5 years of her life and 18 in California. She likely had very little memory of Felix. She stayed on in Pasadena. Felix also wired W. G. Morrow, who was in Pasadena, with a request to represent him at the funeral, and to "make himself known" there.

Felix's other so typical recorded observation was that after all expenses were paid, Jean would have \$9000. On May 10 Felix picked up Alma's cremated remains at the Peterborough customs house. On May 21, after tea he, Carrie and niece Ethel saw them buried in Little Lake Cemetery.

My research did successfully yield interesting and other biographical facts about Alma and Mack's life. But the emotional things, the

family relationships and dynamics, the lifelong traumas of there being too many family deaths too soon, are still invisible to us on the outside.

Why would a 39-year-widow and single mother Alma Brownscombe, who was barely acquainted with Pasadena, deliberately set down roots there with no visible means other than renting out furnished rooms, turn her back on her Peterborough life and family? My best guess is that she and/or one of her girls also had health issues that recommended Pasadena's mountain air and temperature. Or were there other family dynamics at play? What did she think that widowed life would have been like in Peterborough amidst her older siblings and families in 1905?

Now, those few portraits of Alma and Mack in the family photo albums have added meaning as more facts of their sometimes challenging life have been revealed. Alex McCallum was not born with a silver spoon in his mouth. He was an accomplished, self-educated and self-made man who undoubtedly would have contributed much more if he had lived beyond 38 years.

The main Brownscombe family plot at Little Lake Cemetery is close to the Otonabee riverbank. There is also an older plot on a northern slope overlooking Little Lake. That's where I'm destined for. I have checked out the neighbourhood. Mossom Boyd, a formidable, intimidating presence, is just below. I am comfortable more than ever that Alex McCallum, residing immediately next door, will be good company. I'm not really into steam indicators but have always wanted to know how to draw a straight line.

#### SOURCE MATERIAL:

*Felix Brownscombe diaries, photo album, and cash books. Canada, USA and Scotland censuses. Scotland birth records, Canadian birth and death records, and California death indexes. Correspondence with Pasadena history society. Obit in Peterborough Review, Los Angeles Herald, and the 1906 papers of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers. Hard copy of Peterborough Examiner and Review weeklies and online dailies. Directories for Peterborough, Pasadena, Toronto, and Glasgow. Professional journals where noted. Trout family memoirs, Fortnightly Club and Dobbin fonds at Peterborough Museum and Archives.*



## Jennie Brownscombe

Ken Brown



32-page colour catalogue in 2011. The internet presents endless options to acquire versions of her portfolio.

*"The First Thanksgiving at Plymouth" (1914) By Jennie A. Brownscombe (wikimedia) Original in the Stedelijk Museum De Lakenhal*

Jennie Brownscombe (1850-1936) has been described in one American Art History as "a kind of Norman Rockwell of her era." Apart from many sojourns to Europe, she lived in her native Pennsylvania, maintained a studio in the Catskill mountains and a working gallery on 5<sup>th</sup> avenue in New York City. Her specialities were realistic studies of young women and children, and imaginings of colonial American scenes and events. George Washington appears in more than a dozen of her works. Some early student-day images found their way to Harper's Weekly and Scribner's. Her breakthrough first exhibition was at the Women's Pavilion of the 1876 Philadelphia World's Fair. Jennie Brownscombe's most famous painting, entitled "the First Thanksgiving at Plymouth" was a colour feature in Life Magazine in 1942. Over 100 of her paintings have been reproduced as fine art etchings, engravings or colour prints for calendars.

*Jennie, Carrie, and Felix Brownscombe, Stony Lake, early 1930s. At the right is Jean McCallum, daughter of Alma and Mack, also visiting from the U.S.A. at the time.*



Jennie visited the Peterborough Brownscombe family on at least one occasion.

Her work has not been forgotten. The University of Scranton mounted an exhibition of it, complete with

## JURY AT INQUEST CRITICIZES THE FAILURE OF CANADIAN WOOLLENS TO COMPLY WITH FACTORIES ACT

"If Provisions Had Been Carried Out Fatality Might Have Been Avoided."

DEATH OF JAMES HERR

Superintendent of Auburn Plant Admits Elevator is Not Modern.

*Examiner, October 1924*

A verdict implying accidental death was returned last night by the jury inquiring into the death of James Herr, who was killed in an elevator at the Auburn plant of Canadian Woollens Ltd. on Thursday last [9 October].

In the verdict presented by foreman Charles Ackerman, the jury says "we are of the opinion that the elevator was started either by the deceased or some other person or persons unknown." It was shown by witnesses that it is possible to start the elevator from any one of three floors, and that the only warning given is the preliminary shaking of the control rod. The verdict continues: "We are also of the opinion that had the provisions of the Factory Act been complied with, the possibility of this fatality taking place might have been avoided." The sections referred to are those requiring a locking device on the operating rod; a notice "dangerous" in letters at least four inches in height; and guards on the elevator platform. Witnesses from the plant testified that there is no locking device in regular use, and no notice.

The superintendent of the plant, Levi Bond, admitted that the system is not modern, but declared that inspectors from the Workmen's Compensation Board and the Government had repeatedly passed this elevator. The representative of the former body had made his last inspection ten days before the fatality.

County Coroner Dr. T. W. H. Young presided, and the witnesses were examined by County Crown Attorney G. W. Hatton, K.C. The company was not represented by counsel.

### **J. M. McCulloch.**

Dr. J. Malcolm McCulloch said he attended Mr. Herr at Auburn Mills about 4.15 or after the accident and found him dead. Evidence was found of a depression across the body over the lower rib on the left side. Dr. McCulloch came to the conclusion that there had been sufficient fixation of the muscles of the diaphragm to cause suffocation.

### **Dead When Found.**

Levi Bond, superintendent of Canadian Woollens at Auburn plant for 1 years, said he came from Waterloo, New York and his duties are to manufacture cloth and attend to the details of the plant. He saw the body in the

elevator

facing the back. It was caught between the first landing and the floor of the elevator. The feet hung over the edge of the car. When taken down the body showed no evidence of life.

The elevator is operated by a hoisting apparatus and is worked by a rod that shifts the belt. There is no lock on the rod and it can be operated from three floors. The elevator is inspected regularly—four or five times in two years. It has been passed by the Factory Inspector and the Inspector of the Prevention of Accident Association. The government inspector had been there three months ago. He calls twice or three times a year. No recommendations were made regarding the elevator.

Mr. Bond said he is acquainted with the Factory Act and so far as he understands this elevator complies with its provisions. He knew of notices that are to be posted in the plant, but none for the elevator. There are 110 notices affixed to the elevator or gates and Mr. Bond was not aware of the fact that notices are required there. The plant complies with all recommendations from the factory inspector. The name and address of the Inspector are not attached to the elevator, Mr. Bond said, and he did not know this was required.

James Herr was taking a sheet of plastic to the top floor when the accident occurred. Mr. Bond did not know of any provision in the act forbidding operatives using freight elevators. The lower gate works automatically, descending as the elevator rises. The top of the elevator car is covered by a heavy screen, with nothing to obstruct a view of the shaft.

Mr. Hatton read from the Act that notices are to be affixed on elevators at each floor in letters at least 4 inches in height and that a lock must be provided to secure the operating rod. Mr. Bond said neither of these provisions have been recommended by the inspector at the Auburn plant.

### **System Not Modern.**

The starting of the elevator is signalled by the rattling of the operating rod, which can be heard very distinctly on every floor. Characterizing the system as crude, Mr. Hatton asked whether the signal is ever omitted.

"Not to my knowledge."

"It could be done?"

"Yes."

Mr. Bond said his supposition is that Mr. Herr either came to his death by backing off after the elevator started; or he went to shift his load with one foot, and fell off. The fact of the body being inside the gate gave Mr. Bond the impression that Mr. Herr had fallen off after the elevator started.

"It would have been possible to have started the elevator from the top floor just as the man was getting on?"

"Possibly."

The inspector for the Workmen's Compensation Board examined the elevator ten days before the accident.

"You don't consider the system you have at the plant modern?"

"It is not modern."

The foreman of the jury asked whether there had been any complaints of employees starting the elevator while others were working there?

"None whatever."

#### **Same In Other Plants.**

John Southern, assistant superintendent, said he had been with the plant 18 months. He came from Pittsville, Mass. He does not know what notices are required by the Ontario Factory Act. The system of operating the elevator at Auburn is the same as in Pittsville. No other warning was given of operation but the shaking of a cable. The elevator can be started from either inside or outside the car on the lower or top floors.

#### **Didn't Hear Signal.**

Francis Perkins, an employee at Auburn Mills, said at 4.15 there was nothing on the elevator. A few minutes later he heard it in operation. He did not hear the rod shake. The shaking of the rod makes about as much noise as the elevator working. A man on the fourth floor, looking down and seeing no one in the elevator might if he wished start the elevator without warning, but the witness had never known of a person failing to give the warning. The witness said he was waiting to go down in the elevator at the time.

Coroner Dr. Young: "You didn't start the elevator going so that when you were ready the elevator would be at the top?"

"No.."

#### **Other Witnesses.**

Archibald Goldie said he regularly operated the elevator and when starting from the bottom he never shook the rod as it was not necessary. When starting from the top the rod was always shaken.

Percy Telfer an employee in the plant corroborated the evidence of the previous witnesses.

Edward Vinette said he lowered the elevator to allow the removal of the body.

There is no danger at the third floor and the rod is not shaken there. The machinery is on that floor and it can be easily seen whether the elevator is operating. Only one accident has occurred in ten years and that was through a man tampering with the safety appliances, Mr. Vinette said.

A. Kylie, repair man, had never heard of anyone

starting the elevator without shaking the rod.

James Nelson said he had never seen the elevator started without warning and he never remembered telling anyone he had. He did not tell the police, he said, that he had known it to start without warning. Finally he said "I might or I mightn't; I don't think I did tell anyone."

Florence Driscoll said sufficient time is always allowed to elapse between shaking the rod and starting the operation so that a reply may be received from anyone proposing to operate it from another floor.

#### **The Verdict.**

"We the jury empanelled to inquire into the death of James Herr who met his death in the Canadian Woollen Company on the afternoon of October 9. after listening to the evidence of witnesses and after visiting the scene of the fatality are of the opinion that the deceased met his death by being caught between the platform of the elevator and the gate and ceiling of the basement in the factory. We are of the opinion that the elevator was started by either the deceased or some person or persons unknown to ourselves. We are also of the opinion that had the provisions of the Factory Act been complied with, i.e., that the elevator must be provided with a locking device; that the word "dangerous" in letters at least 4 inches high must be affixed to the bottom rail of every gate, and the top of the platform shall have guards to protect the occupants; that the possibility of this fatality taking place might have been avoided."

The jury consisted of: Charles Ackerman, foreman; John Gillespie. Frank Maloney, Thomas Shields, Dennis Maloney, Martin Furlong, Frederick Miller, Thomas McAuley, Joseph Methers, E. V. Warne, T. J. Wilson.

#### **JAMES HERR.**

*Examiner 14 Oct 1924*

The funeral of the late James F. Herr, East City, who was killed at the Auburn Mills on Wednesday, 8<sup>th</sup> October, was held on Saturday morning from his late residence, 531 Rogers Street, to the Immaculate Conception Church, thence to St. Peter's Cemetery for interment.

The deceased was held in high esteem by all those who knew him, and his kindly disposition had won for him a large number of friends.

Besides his sorrowing wife, there are left to mourn his loss two sisters and two brothers. Mrs. John Devlin, East City. Mrs. Michael McManus, Douro, and Michael and John of Norwood.

The pall-bearers were Messrs. Jos. Garvey, George Hynes. James Boland, John Gooley, Joseph Christie, and Richard Heffermn.



## PETERBOROUGH'S NEW WAR MEMORIAL – ARMISTICE DAY 1928

Don Willcock

*It took eight years for a dedicated community committee to bring the Peterborough City and County Citizens' War Memorial to reality: from the initial idea proposed by the local Red Cross Society branch, to the choosing of Walter Allward as designer and sculptor, through the gathering of names to be inscribed, to the official unveiling in June 1929, it was not an easy road. Anyone, however, who stands in front of it even today must admit that the Memorial is, at the very least, a magnificent piece of public art. Anyone who has the name of a family member or friend inscribed on it recognizes a deeper significance of the Memorial – as does anyone who has attended even one of the annual Remembrance Day ceremonies organized by Branch #52 of the Royal Canadian Legion. What then were the feelings experienced by the populace of Peterborough City and County on Sunday, 11 November 1928 when they commemorated the tenth anniversary of the Armistice that ended the fighting of the 1914-18 World War by holding the ceremony in front of their new war memorial?*

*Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, there was no public Remembrance Day ceremony at the War Memorial – for the first time since 1928. Perhaps, then, this is an appropriate time to go back to that year and imagine, at least some, of the emotions that Peterborough residents and visitors felt after a decade of post-war life. The Peterborough Evening Examiner (Tuesday, 13 November 1928; pp. 1 & 3) gives the following detailed account of the city's 1928 Armistice Day ceremony. (The name "Armistice Day" was not changed by Parliament to "Remembrance Day" until 1931.)*

**VETERANS HONOR MEMORY OF NOBLE DEAD  
Heroic Sacrifice Is Recalled In Great Memorial Service  
Veterans and Citizens Join in Most Impressive  
Commemoration Service at Cenotaph  
and in Capitol Theatre on Tenth Anniversary of Armistice**

Surrounding the cenotaph the citizens of Peterborough, and the veterans of the Great War in particular, paid visible tribute Sunday afternoon to "the gallant spirits who were faithful even unto death" while in the service of their country during the Great War.

The veterans, drawn up in two long ranks facing the cenotaph, stood in impressive and solemn silence in homage to the memory of their fallen comrades. Shining medals, two, three and four in number, worn on their

breasts gave significant testimony of their own brave service to their country. The citizens stood behind, and they, too, stood in silent respect to the glorious memory of loved ones who gave their lives in the hour of our country's need.

The Boy Scouts, representing the youth of Canada, where drawn up at one end of the veterans, and they were proof that young Canada appreciates full well the debt they owe those men who gave their lives in Flanders Fields, and revere their memory and their deeds.

It was a short, impressive ceremony, impressive in its simplicity, throbbing with silent eloquence of feeling, there enacted at the cenotaph. The Rangers' Band played hymns at the beginning, and then James Abraham, commander of the Peterborough branch of Canadian Legion, snapped out the order "Attention!" and the long lines of veterans sprang erect with the smartness gained ten long years and more ago, "The Last Post" rang out on the still air, sweet and sad, the Union Jack at the flag-staff was slowly lowered, the "Reveille" sent out its silvery call to action, and the flag was slowly raised, billowing in the wind.

### **Wreaths Are Placed.**

The wreaths were then reverently and carefully placed in large numbers on the base of the cenotaph, completely covering its base. There were wreaths from many old comrades of the fallen, from many clubs, fraternal organizations, and from the city. Some of the wreaths bore the names of those who placed them there. They were from the Canadian Legion, Sons of England, the Ladies' Auxiliary of the Canadian Legion, Otonabee chapter of the I.O.D.E., veterans of the Fire Brigade, Women's Liberal Club, the Women's Conservative Club, the 21st Battalion Club, the Knights of Columbus, the city of Peterborough, and the Fifth Peterborough Boy Scout Troop, and many others.

The veterans then paraded to the Capitol Theatre for the program there. The parade made an impressive appearance as it marched down George street. The Rangers' Band played the same stirring music that these men had marched to many years before, and they stepped out briskly, old soldiers all. Following the band marched representatives of the city. Then came two grizzled veterans of the war of 1866 [Fenian Raid], Colonel J.W. Miller, marching briskly, who refused to ride in the car provided for him because he wanted to march with the boys. The veterans came swinging down the street with the same old rhythm that carried them over the roads of France. A squad of veterans of the Fire Brigade made a

snappy appearance in their smart blue uniforms. The Boy Scouts brought up the rear, showing their pride in every step at the opportunity to march with the men who had defended the Empire.

#### **Spectators Stand at Attention.**

Spectators stood at attention as the parade marched past and many removed their hats in token of their respect for these men who had fought for them and with them in France.

Hundreds of reverent citizens entered the Capitol Theatre with them to recall and pay tribute to the men who died for their country. The theatre was soon filled to capacity and the whole building was in the hush of memory. The Rangers' Band played "O Canada", the national anthem of Canada, and the piece of music never, perhaps, reacted with deeper feeling upon the audience. Then the "Last Post" resounded its high, sweet, silvery notes to the ears of the silent, deep-thinking audience. James Abraham, who presided, requested that the audience stand in two minutes of silence. The audience stood with bowed heads, each heart crowded with memories of the dead. The band played that plaintive hymn that men have listened to and sang in moments of great feeling down through the years, "Nearer My God to Thee". The band then played that lament for the dead, "The Dead March in Saul".

Mr. Abraham then explained in a few simple sentences the great meaning of the service. "it is to revere our fallen comrades. 'Greater love hath no man than this, than a man lay down his life for a friend.' We are here also to commemorate the signing of the armistice, ten years ago to-day."

The band played, "Abide With Me", in quiet notes.



*Photo of Judge Huycke in his office. To the audience in the Capitol Theatre, Judge Huycke explained the symbolism of Peterborough's new Citizens' War Memorial. The report in the 13 November 1928 Evening Examiner continues:*

His Honor Judge Huycke gave a graphic and eloquent interpretation of the symbolism of the Peterborough War Memorial. He spoke of the difficulties

the committee appointed for securing of a memorial suitable to commemorate the city's brave dead had met and overcome. He thought that the memorial to Peterborough's soldier dead would keep ever green the memory of their sacrifice.

Speaking of the design of fleur-de-lis carved on the base of the memorial, Judge Huycke said this drew attention to the fact that the war was fought in France and for France.

The crouching figure which surmounts the granite base at the western side symbolizes the defeated figure of the enemy, seething with rage, fury and disappointment. In his left hand, he carries the flambeau, or blazing torch, which was used to destroy the cities and farmsteads of France and Belgium.

At his left side and fallen at his feet is a broken sword. Cringing and cowering, he recoils from the erect figure that stands watching him. Why?

Because the figure which he faces, built in the same heroic mould as the figure of the defeated enemy, is tall and dignified and stands up straight and firm. While hate, fury and destruction animate the countenance of the defeated foe, kindness and good will and determination are the qualities which are written on the face of the other figure, representative of the knight of Chivalry.

#### **Used Only If Needed.**

In the hand of this figure is held the sword, drawn but held downwards, to indicate the fact that the sword will be used only if needed, but is there for a certain purpose. The left hand is held upward, meaning: "You must go back. You have come this far. Come no farther." Before that upraised hand, the opposing figure reels back.

On the back of the Knight of Chivalry, we see a shield or buckler on which is emblazoned the cross. It is the cross of the White Christ and was used by the Crusaders of old to show that they fought under the standard of Christianity.

There is a wonderful expression on both faces. In the one, that of the Knight of Chivalry, is dignity, power and victory, and in the other, the face of the defeated enemy, is defeat, rage and despair.

The Knight of Chivalry stands for the Canadian soldier, the soldier of the Allies, and for the sentiment of those seven hundred and fifteen [717] men from Peterborough and its district who gave up their lives in the Great War, that Christianity might be saved. This figure represents the heroic spirit of sacrifice which animated the sons of Peterborough.

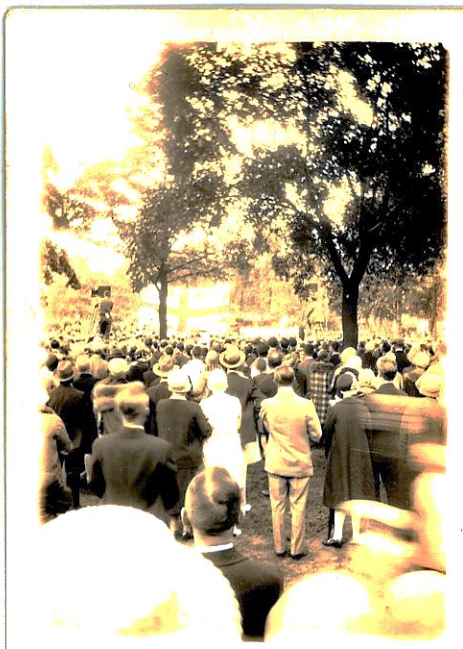
Chivalry in the olden days meant helping the weak, defending the defenceless, protecting women and children. The ideal of chivalry in all ages has been the defeat of the bully and the redressing of the wrongs of those who cannot help themselves.

Judge Huycke spoke of the sacredness of the

memorial itself and the deeds it commemorated. He begged that mothers should teach their children to approach the monument with fitting feeling of respect and gratitude.

The band played "Land of Hope and Glory" and then "God Save the King" and the great service to commemorate the tenth year of the signing of the armistice was over.

*While the 1928 Armistice Day ceremony was the first event held at the new Citizens' War Memorial, it was not officially "unveiled" until 30 June 1929 as the special opening for Peterborough's "Old Home Week". The Peterborough Evening Examiner (Tuesday, 2 July 1929; p. 2) expounded that 'The sublimest hour in Peterborough's long century of community life and progress ticked and tolled its solemn, glowing minutes on Sunday afternoon in Central Park during the ceremony of the unveiling and dedication of the heroic memorial to the city and county who died in the great war of 1914-1918.'*



*The report went on to describe the entire ceremony, including verbatim transcriptions of three of the main speeches given on the occasion. The first was that of General Sir Arthur Currie, commander of the Canadian Corps at the Battle of Vimy Ridge, who had been invited to unveil the Memorial but was seriously ill in a Montreal hospital and so could not attend. His speech, however, was read by local veteran Colonel Charles H. Ackerman, president of Canadian Legion's Provincial Command. General Currie's message is as follows:*

*"I deeply appreciate the opportunity of sending through a word of greeting to the veterans gathered in Peterborough. I only wish that it were possible for me to be with you and to grasp again the hands of those whose*

*friendship and devoted efforts must ever remain a treasured memory and a cherished inspiration.*

*"In all such gatherings as this it is borne in upon us that the principles which guided our corps must ever remain a potent force in the life of our homeland. In those happy but anxious days of war you asked nothing for yourselves; you sought only the privilege of serving your country, and of protecting it from the foes that threatened it. Your only reward was the consciousness of duty well done, and of tasks heroically performed.*

#### **How Can We Serve?**

*"The question we are asking to-day is: 'How can we serve our country best, and perpetuate in Canada the ideals for which we fought and for which our comrades died?' in our war efforts, before making our final attack we first decided on our objective. On that final objective there was no doubt, no difference of opinion, no hesitancy, no fear. It was clear and decisive. And failure to reach it was never thought of. To that objective we move forward with confidence in our own power, and that confidence was never once misplaced.*

*"In these times of peace, we should be just as clear and decisive as we were in war days in our aims, in what we are trying or hoping to do, and in our ways and means of doing it. It seems to me that there are three or four paramount objectives to which we should all devote our efforts. There is the perpetuation of the principles and ways of life which characterized our units during the war. Friendship and comradeship were there, with a warmth and glow never known before. The old code of the sea, 'Stand by', was part of the day's work; not something extraordinary or unusual. Comrade 'stood by' comrade, even unto death, and lives were gladly laid down for friends. Unselfishness was a way of life in the Canadian Corps. Mutual trust, the bearing of one another's burdens, fidelity and loyalty to each other, to the unit, and to the Corps, these were the supports by which men lived in the brightest and darkest hours. There was never a time in the history of our country when these qualities of character, these ways of life were so urgently needed as now. This is our first objective. Let us move forward to it with confidence and hope.*

#### **Welfare of Disabled.**

*"Then there is another objective – the welfare of our disabled comrades, of our comrades who find life difficult, of wives and children of the men who died. Adequate care for disabled comrades, and for the dependents of those who fell, adequate employment for those whose careers were broken by four or five years of war – that is an objective from which there must be no retreat.*

*"One of the great problems of our time is the unity of the British Commonwealth of Nations. During the war we were an Empire unit, co-operating under one flag and one leader, in the cause for which the Empire has always*



stood, the cause of freedom and equal rights for all. We retained our identity, it is true, as the Canadian Corps, but we were proud to be associated with our kindred from other Dominions, in one vast organization of Empire. That organization still exists; it did not vanish with the war; it still calls for the clasp of hands across the sea; it still demands the interpretation of one part to another, and it still requires unity of effort in its forward march to world service.

"Perhaps the greatest contribution to the peace of the world can be made by the veteran of Canada to the peace of the world. We have the unequalled advantage of having known and experienced the meaning of war. We are not speaking from theories only, but from actual practice. We know its horrors and its heart-aches; its privations and its wounds and tears; we know its days and nights of arduous anxiety and cruel toil, and we know its aftermath and all the sorrows that followed in its train. We speak then of peace, with the authority of service.

"There is a new spirit abroad. Once upon a time we thought we were fighting in a war to end war. That thought strengthened us and inspired us and carried us through our most bitter trials. But after the Armistice, for a time at least, we felt that the fates had played with us, and that our dream was not to come true. Bitterness and hate and mad competition and arrogance seemed still to be present with even greater force. We were inclined perhaps to be pessimistic, or to smile with cynicism at what we thought the pranks of time. But to-day we have no place for pessimism. There is a whisper of peace throughout all the world. Towards that objective we must confidently see our faces. Our dreams of the war to end war must soon come true.

#### **Keep Faith With Dead.**

"Last of all, we must keep faith with our absent comrades who sleep in honored graves. They gave their young lives gladly that the country of their birth or adoption might be a better place in which to live, a more fortunate land in which the children of the future might first see the light of day. This is the real meaning of their struggle and their death – that the thing we call justice might not vanish from the earth but might ever be present in our country and in our world.

"Canada is a better land, a land of ordered freedom, of equality, of opportunity, of justice to all, because of their struggle and their death, and it is only by direction all our energies to keeping it so that we can keep faith with them and perpetuate their spirit. From the undiscovered country their voices still call us to service for Canada, the homeland which will ever keep them in remembrance."

*With General Currie unable to perform the unveiling, a most appropriate substitute was found in the person of*

*Archdeacon F.G. Scott, director of the Canadian Army Chaplain Service, who was introduced by Judge Huycke as 'the darling of the Canadian Army'. Chaplain Scott's words:*

"I cannot express the emotion that wells up at this time," said Mr. Scott. "It is unfortunate that Sir Arthur Currie is not here as he is loved by all, and is one of the greatest men in Canada, with the interest of all the soldiers at heart.

"It has been the proudest moment in my life to unveil a memorial with seven hundred and seventeen names inscribed on it. When I heard the acceptance by your mayor I wondered if the people of Peterborough realized just what it meant.

"This common ground has become the most sacred spot in the city, and a place of vision. This monument will become an inspiration for years to come where many a young man in time of stress will look and read the names inscribed and will receive visions to inspire him, urging him to imitate the deeds of those who are remembered here.

"People will come here and see what courage can do – the voice of those who have passed are still calling to us and for us to trust in God.

#### **Visions of France.**

"It is a great trust that the mayor has taken on the city. This place is a place of vision – as I look around and see my old comrades with their medals and marks left by wounds, and see before me the people who have been bereaved by the war, visions of France appear before me.

"Valcartier, with its hills tinted with the colors of autumn, appears – the memory of that camp never fails me. The flotilla of ships that bore the sons of Canada across the sea, carrying men to war who were untried in battle, men who were to meet the greatest armies in the world, the armies of Europe.

"I can remember the thrill that went through the hearts of men banded together. We did not know then, the dreary years of war that were to follow, the hardships, and bereavements that were the outcome of it all.

"We did not know then and hardly know now the privileges that were won for Canada by those men who gathered to the flag in the time of stress.

"The great vision of the second Battle of Ypres when the gas was turned on at St. Julien, the troops drawn up in the moonlight for the charge when at the end of the salient German flares threw an uncanny glow over the field, the rattle of rifles and the gallant charge appears before me.

"I remember Hills 60 and 70 the Somme, Regina Trench – what a terrible toll was taken at the Somme, but the victory was indirectly as the Germans did not break through the French Line and capture Verdun.

#### **People Fail to Realize.**

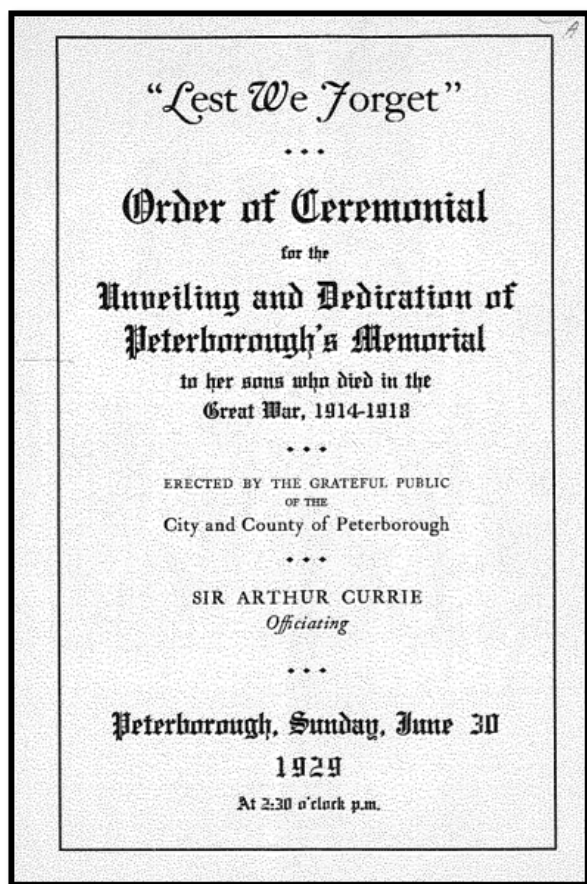
"At Vimy Ridge, one of the most strategic points on a nine mile front, and at Hill 70 the people at home did

not realize what was taking place there. The gas flooded the artillery, the infantry were crying for the guns to get into action, but the gunners were hindered by their masks, so to give support to the men up in front they threw off the masks and faced the gas, dying and struggling to keep the guns in action.

"Amiens, where the Canadians broke through, Canal Du Nord, and Cambrai all appear before me as wonderful events and examples of courage, discipline and sacrifice which were performed and that will never be known.

"All the magnificent deeds of the war are brought near by this moment – those scenes of Canadian triumph and glory. It has brought our dear ones who have been lost very near.

"You people of Peterborough, the names of your boys are here, though their frames may be broken in France and remain there, they are not dead – their souls live on. They still live on as an inspiration in your home and private life. Surely they have left us a lesson of such noble quality that we shall not lose them."



The third prominent speaker of the day was Colonel Henry C. Osborne, a member of the Imperial War Graves Commission (which became the Commonwealth War Graves Commission in 1960). In what the Evening Examiner described

as "an eloquent address", Colonel Osborne described the significance of Peterborough's Memorial:

"It is meant to recall the heroic and sacrificing part played by this city and county in the titanic struggle of the greatest of all wars. The memory of a noble company of men who have passed out of sight, laying down their lives in the accomplishment of their high vision of duty."

Continuing, Colonel Osborne said that it was significant and fitting that the Memorial should be dedicated on the eve of July 1, and at a time when Canada's place in the British Empire is being more clearly understood.

In reviewing Peterborough's readiness to serve in the hour of our country's need, he said: "Ever since the first settlers landed at this place, now called Peterborough, their patriotism and willingness to aid their country has been evidenced. Peterborough men have been in every battle for Canada since its founding. In 1837-38 a company of Peterborough volunteers participated, in 1860, in 1885 and again in the Boer War a Peterborough company was in the Canadian contingent. During the Great War a Peterborough man was to be found in every division of the Canadian forces.

"A company of Peterborough men, No. 1 Company of the Second Battalion, took one of the most dangerous machine gun nests in the whole war. They were led by Major G.W. Bennett, and he with many of his men laid down their lives in the brave charge."

#### **Name Is Carried On.**

"It is only fitting that the great fighting unit, the Second Battalion, has become the Peterborough Rangers, the city's own regiment, and has the privilege of carrying on its regimental colors the names of all the great battles of the war, beginning at the Second Battle of Ypres, 1915. that the citizens of this city are patriotic in service is no vain boast, as this afternoon will testify. The men rallied to the call, and this memorial, though silent, will speak to men's hearts of the valiant sacrifice of those 717 men whose names appear upon its base."

Colonel [Osborne], in complimenting the city on erecting such a unique memorial, said that it had been conceived by the greatest Canadian sculptor, Walter S. Allward, who is now working on the great Canadian memorial at Vimy Ridge.

"The noble chivalric figure seen here which opposes himself with such calm serenity to the brute force of the enemy, exemplifies the spirit of the men in whose memory it is erected. Canada is enriched by such a memorial, and the men with the foresight to plan it are to be congratulated. It symbolizes the moral over material and brute force."

Colonel [Osborne] described the cemeteries on the battlefields of France in which rest so many Canadian heroes. In all, there are 14,188 British war cemeteries throughout the world. These cemeteries are permanently

and artistically arranged. Their uniformity of stone crosses, row on row, flowers in beds and borders, green turf like that of old England, is striking. Somehow the perfect order of these soldiers' graves makes one think that some day they will arise and go marching off again in platoons and regiments. Nothing disturbs the noble rest of these brave men except the sweet song of the birds.

#### Feeling of Exaltation.

"One has not the feeling of sadness when entering one of these cemeteries," continued Colonel Osborne. "Rather it is a feeling of exaltation for the great deeds of these men. We judge the men of ancient times by the relics that we dig up. When many centuries have passed away these cemeteries will remain and speak to other races of the kind of men who lived and died in our day. What an epic this memorial will disclose, what a chapter in the world's history, telling of 717 men from this city and its neighborhood who willingly marched away and died for their country. I am proud to stand in front of this memorial, and the pride of my British heritage thrills me when I look upon it and think of what it represents.

"The deeds of these men are linking the Empire closer together. Deeds which signify suffering mutually accepted, sufferance mutually endured to bind the Empire in closer bonds."



*The unveiling of the Peterborough City and County Citizens' War Memorial was summed up nicely in a separate commentary in the same Evening Examiner (2 July 1929; p 4):*

#### THE WAR MEMORIAL

It was a most happy thought that made the unveiling of Peterborough's war memorial the closing event in the Old Home Week program, and allowed Peterborough citizens, past and present, to pay tribute to the memory of the city's glorious war dead before embarking upon the festivities that would have never been possible had it not been for the courage and patriotism of those gallant soldiers and their comrades.

Peterborough, he said, deserved to be congratulated upon refusing to follow the easy way of adopting some conventional design.

The committee, in securing the services of a great artist and in waiting patiently until he could execute the task, had made a valuable contribution to Canadian art and achieved a memorial that would be increasingly cherished as the years pass.

This tribute from an authority of Colonel Osborne's capacity must have been most pleasing to the members of the War Memorial Committee and to citizens generally.

*Thanks to Betty Hinton for the two photographs taken by her father in 1929 on the occasion of the dedication of the War Memorial.*

#### Peterborough Remembers Its Fallen

Don Willcock has written the definitive account of how Peterborough got its iconic war memorial. He has used the minutes of the War Memorial Committee at the Peterborough Museum and Archives as well as newspaper accounts and some memories.

The story has several interesting twists and turns. The Peterborough Committee selected Walter Allward to design and execute the memorial. When he got the nod to design and build the fantastic monument at Vimy Ridge, a project completed in 1936, he wanted to cancel the Peterborough contract. Judge Huycke would not let him do so. Peterborough got its iconic war memorial, and eight years before Vimy Ridge. A fascinating story.

Don Willcock, *Peterborough Remembers Its Fallen: The City and County Citizens' War Memorial*, the 41<sup>st</sup> occasional paper by the Peterborough Historical Society. The papers have appeared annually since 1980.

The occasional papers are a benefit of membership in the Peterborough Historical Society, but may also be purchased from Hutchison House and from Trent Valley Archives for \$6 plus postage and handling. The booklet can be purchased by calling TVA at 705-745-4404 and be picked up curbside during the current lockdown.



# News, Views and Review

## PETERBORO'S LITTLE RIVERS

We have four of them, one was known as the Aylmer street creek, one the Downie street creek, one the Ashburnham creek and the other the largest, the "Town creek." It begins its life about 25 miles North West of the city in the big Cavan swamp.

The Downie street creek takes its rise only a few miles back in Smith township. The hills to the north are so shaped that they gather the water from rains and melting snow and rush them down to Smith Park lots, where they form a decided creek which comes down the North Ward school grounds, then through Jordon Bros' Conservatory grounds and then, following the Lakefield branch of the G.T.R. they strike Aylmer street, pass into the Chambers block through the middle of which they passed to McDonnell street, which they flooded, and finally made their way into the town creek. Before getting away all the property between London and Macdonell streets and as low down as Murray street, were annually flooded. The creek was a public nuisance. The city took it in hand and diverted the creek causing it to pass through large pipes which led down the west aide of Aylmer street, turned to the west followed north side of McDonnell street to Bethune street, then passes south through pipes and flowed into the Town creek north of Fitzgerald's wood yard. The pipes in flood time were too small so the City continued the pipe line past McDonnell street still along the west side of Aylmer street where the pipe line was turned into the Town creek opposite Dr. Hammond's residence. That was an improvement, but in flood time the water burst through the pipe joints and again flooded the streets and cellars. Then the Council went back and did what should have been done in the first instance. They bought or procured right of way from Jordan's hot houses directly east to the river, they excavated a channel, put in large pipes and ran the flood water direct to the river. This stream now has three mouths and there is no trouble. Thus the City dealt with this public nuisance.

## Smells of Charlotte Street and beyond 1956

A few days ago I added a post to the Facebook group, "I grew up in Peterborough in the 1950s and 60s". The post consisted of a scan of pages from "Vernon's Peterborough Directory 1956" that showed the businesses then operating on Charlotte Street between George and Aylmer Streets. And I added a list of smells I associated with some of the businesses that were on the south side.

Eaton's - new cardboard boxes  
A&P - fresh ground coffee  
Burtol Cleaners - dry cleaning chemicals  
McGillis Hotel - beer, when the door of the Men's Entrance was left open in summer months  
Peterborough Pet Shop - wood shavings from the cages of parakeets, guinea pigs, white mice and other little creatures  
Madame Merriam's Beauty Salon - ammonia used for hair permanents, again, when the door was left open in the

*Examiner, 1924*

The Ashburnham creek was dealt with in the same way. The creek was completely diverted, carried by pipes for half a mile south and turned into the river. Thus was number two creek nuisance effectively dealt with.

Next came the Downie street creek, it was a public nuisance. It came down through the "Dixon" farm, on down and over City lots and streets until it crossed McDonnell street and finally passed into the Town creek above Reid street. It was a public nuisance and flooded a great many lots and streets. Several times in summer, after cloud bursts amongst the hills in Smith, the water came down in great volumes flooding all the neighborhood of Downie Street and the streets in the north west portion of the City. It was twenty-five years ago diverted by the Council but the result was an expenditure of money and dozens of threatened law suits. The people suffered for 25 years and then rose in rebellion. The Council then took it in hand and between London and McDonnell streets made a new channel into the Town creek at Macdonell street. The Council made a cement bottom and walled channel and made a new bridge over Macdonell street and led this turbulent stream into the Town creek west of William Hamilton's foundry. They also went up stream and took the creek from the side of Downie street where they had foolishly placed it and after buying land on its old natural channel they enclosed it in cement, bottom and sides, and made it straight again as it was before they led it meandering around three sides of a block. The creek is still a public nuisance and it is for the Council to deal with it as they have with the other creeks. The sooner this is done the better.

Public nuisances are for the public to deal with. No man through whose lands a creek passes is under any obligation to spend a cent on it. Nature placed it there, it may stay in the full enjoyment of its freedom, however mischievous. It is for the Council to deal with it as a public nuisance, as they did with other small creeks.

*Douglas Bacon*

summer months

Art Bacon's Men's Wear - freshly unpacked Cotton shirts  
Bill's Place - roasted rotisserie chicken  
Shoe Repair (SW corner Louis St) - leather and shoe polish

I read years ago that olfactory memories can be particularly vivid and are retained for years.

Chasing rabbits in my mind with these thoughts, I began to think that I could actually write a short piece about how my/our sense of smell was at work in those and many other places in the city in the 1950s.

The best smell, my happiest memory on the subject, was/is of the smell of roasted wheat and rice from Quaker Oats. That smell would permeate the air over the city shortly after the bang heard when the grains were "Shot from Guns" (as ads claimed). My family lived at the top of Benson

Avenue hill, corner of O'Carroll Street, and that honey-sweet smell reached all the way to the Normal School, two doors north of O'Carroll

As for the worst, for me it was the smell of the Sheep Barn at the Peterborough Exhibition

There were lots of smells that fell somewhere in between those two. First thoughts are of the good ones, such as popcorn at the movie theaters, candy floss on the Midway at the Exhibition, caramelized sugar of humbugs at Hooper's Confections, mink and lambswool's coats at Lech's Furriers, smoke inside Louis Billiards, floral arrangements inside Kaye's Funeral Home (where the funerals of several of my ancestors were held), cooking oil from Percy's Chip Wagon outside PCVS at noon hour, machine oil on the floors at CGE, fresh bread outside Trent Valley bakeries on Dublin

Street. Those come to mind at once, but with a little more effort I know I could think of others.

So, I began to ask myself, could this be a subject of a short historical sketch? Maybe that's already happened, but I'm wondering.

What do you think, Elwood?

Inquisitively and fragrantly, (some people do, after all, like the 'fragrance' of bacon :-)

Douglas

*Ed. Note: It certainly has possibilities. One of the hardest things to capture from the past is the smells, and we know that people become comfortable with the smells that are close at hand. Thanks Doug.*

## Rediscovering an early map of Peterborough

The Archives of Ontario has the original of a very special map of early Peterborough. The map, showing the surveyed and unsurveyed land in the town, is dated at the Surveyor General's Office in Kingston, 21 July 1843. J. Huston made this "Diagram of the Town Reservation of Peterborough" and Thomas Parke, the Surveyor General signed it. Some of the notations on the map suggest it was updated to 1847, and probably used by Sandford Fleming in his fine engraving of Peterborough, a map he sold locally and at the fair in Cobourg.

The original survey of Peterborough was done in 1825 by Richard Birdsall, and the boundaries of the town had been established in 1818. There are many interesting observations to make as the map allows us to know what was current thinking in 1843.

For example, the block bounded by George, Murray, Aylmer and McDonnell consisted of seven pairs of lots running from Murray to McDonnell. The first two lots west of George were marked "General Burial". Lots three were set aside as a "Garden". Lots 4, 5 and 6 from Murray to McDonnell were marked "R. Catholic Church." Lot 7 was noted as "Ch. of England." The reference is "O. C. 2634 17 Aug 46." Note the spelling used for McDonnell street varies.

One lot on the side of London [south London east George 5] is set aside for a school; O.C. 24 May 1845.

Lots 3 and 4 east Water from Murray to McDonnell were set aside for "schools reserve O. C. 10 Aug '43 No. 1354".

The mill site along the Otonabee River contains many lots. The mill is shown on the river on lots 13 and 14 south McDonnell east Water. "Hall's Mill Race" is shaded to include most of the land between Waterford and the river, and referenced as Crown Sale No. 1930 and O. C. 645. A comment that was crossed out said this included "the clergy Reserve No. 31 in 18<sup>th</sup> Con. Otonabee." This lot at the very north-east corner of Otonabee township is now the site of Nicholls Oval.

The Court House is shown occupying the lots between Brock and Murray, east Water lots 5, 6 and 7. The lots 1 to 4 are shown as adjacent and it is noted "Wanted for a Public Square Council Nov 18 47." An unnamed street (now partly Dickson) runs from McDonnell to just south of Hunter between lots 7 and 8, just behind the Court House. Where this

*Elwood H. Jones*

street meets Hunter there seem to be two buildings and the notation that there was a sale and also that G. B. Hall has the property by O. C. 1537. The shore line seems to be marked as covered by an "Order in Council 16<sup>th</sup> April 1773".

The lots facing Brock and Hunter, east Water 1 to 4 are marked for the "Episcopal Church", while what is now Sheridan Street occupied lots 5 east of Water; the notation is "56 ft Road Municipal Council".

Moving along Hunter Street, lots 6 and 7 were covered by O. C. 1227 while lot 8 was marked O. C. 1463. The first two lots, now the corner of Sheridan and Hunter, was the site for the British Wesleyan Methodist Church in the years before the union of Wesleyan Methodists in 1845. For several years this was the home for the Union School until the new Union School was built on Murray Street in 1860. Two houses, designed by John Belcher in an Italianate style, were built on this site, and still stand. The lot 8 is now the western limit of Quaker Oats.

The Hunter Street Bridge is shown with five piers. This would be the original bridge built in 1826 with provincial assistance, but apparently repaired often following the spring floods.

White's Hotel is shown at Dalhousie and George. From Wolf [Wolfe] Street to Charlotte Street, the lots east Water 2 on each block are marked for John Brown and marked as sale No. 146.

The shore line on both sides of Dalhousie are marked the 26 January 1837, and the adjacent shore line to south of Wolf is marked "O. C. 14 Jan'y '37".

Between Reade [Reid] and Rubidge there are a series of lots marked A to F between Charlotte and just north of Brock [now Kirk Street]. Two of the lots, D and F, at the head of Hunter and Brock were designated Catholic Church and Scotch Church. The two churches on these sites date from 1837 and 1834 respectively.

At the corner of Bethune and King street [west George lot 10, north King], the map shows a school and the note "O. C. 26 Jan'y 1845".

At the corner of Dalhousie and Aylmer three corner lots were surveyed. R. P. Madge was on the northeast corner [O.C. 2392]. W. Smart was on the southeast corner [O.C. 1267]. On the northwest corner the notation was Crown Sale

No. 2613 +-35. Further east on Dalhousie [west George 4, north Dalhousie] was Crown sale 2168 +-40. The lot at south Dalhousie, lot west George 4, the notation read O. C. 1507 21 Mar 44.

Along Wolf [Wolfe] St. there were several surveyed lots. On the north side, west George 4 was Crown Sale 273. On the

south side, lot 1 west George was sale No. 94; lot 2, simply sold. Lot 4 was Crown Sale 42, while lot 7, at Aylmer, was Crown Sale 1503.

There are many other fascinating details not easily found elsewhere.

make good their claim to be the best fitters in Town.

Customers providing their own cloths and trimmings, will be attended as usual; and punctuality is the motto of the Heimatemporion.

Water street, Peterboro'

Dec. 24<sup>th</sup> 1856

*Weekly Despatch, issues in 1856 and 1857.*

## Wonders of the Age

### PHOTOGRAPHS TAKEN BY ELECTRIC LIGHT.

We take pleasure in announcing that we have Introduced into our Gallery the Latest Wonder Photography, whereby Ladies and Gentlemen can have their Photographs taken by Electric Light, with fully as good and Striking Effects as by the old fashioned Sun.

To enable the public to enjoy this Latest Luxury of the Age, our Gallery will be kept open in the Evenings until Nine o'clock, and on Saturdays until Ten o'clock. Appointments may be made during the day for Evening Sitzings.

GET POPULAR PRICES. Come and see the newest Sensation of the day and you will be delighted,

## HAMMILL & BALL

PHOTOGRAPHERS  
GEORGE STREET, PETERBOROUGH, ENTRANCE  
BY HALL DOOR BETWEEN FAIRWEATHER'S  
AND MILLS BROS. HAT STORES.

[Peterborough Review, 1885]

HEIMATEMPORION.

Wm. & George Johnston

Merchant Tailors.

BEG leave to return their sincere thanks for the liberal patronage bestowed upon them, since their commencement in business. They take this opportunity to inform their many customers, that they are now in the regular receipt of the BRITISH and AMERICAN FASHIONS. And as their stock of Cloths and Trimmings will be found to be of the very best quality, they would solicit a continuation of the confidence heretofore reposed in them. They would also assure their Patrons, that no efforts will be spared by them in obtaining the latest improvements in their line of business, so that they can

*The Heritage Gazette published an article on the Hammill and Ball photographers in February 2021. This is an unusual advertisement and worth your attention, too.*

**Trent Valley Archives has an intern,** Candace Snoddon, from Fleming College for the next few months who will assist us in aspects of our new Victorian Maps Project. Working with Elwood and Heather we plan to create a comprehensive catalogue of all the maps and plans at TVA that have links to the Victorian period or that are unusual and special in some respect. As well, we will create a plan for the proper repair and preservation of the maps. Some maps have been preserved by photographs, photostats, photocopying and digitizing. We are looking at other ways.



## Early Travel by Water & Rail – TVA Zoom Talk

On Thursday, April 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2021 at 7 pm., Trent Valley Archives presented a Zoom talk by Bob Reid, author and noted rail enthusiast, on early travels by water and rail. The topic, “Peterborough to Lake Ontario by Water and Rail: A Short Pictorial History 1833-1964” will chronicle the challenges posed by the terrain, the politics and the engineering and what was required to overcome these obstacles.

In earlier times communication between Peterborough and Lake Ontario was mostly achieved by rail and water routes. The first of these routes was the Grand Junction Railway, a line connecting Belleville to Ashburnham (Peterborough) in 1880. Following this came the Trent Canal, making navigation possible from Trenton to Peterborough in 1920.



This talk was free to the public and was followed by TVA’s Annual General Meeting. Over 60 members attended the event. Robert Reid’s presentation was well-received. The illustrations were well chosen and the explanations clear. The discussion of the railways and the

canal was well-detailed especially for Campbellford and Peterborough where changing water levels and the rerouting of the canal after the railways had been built led to interesting changes. He used some historic pictures from TVA’s Eason collection of Trent Valley Canal photos. There was a short video showing Campbellford’s former bascule bridge in action. It was a memorable evening.

The photo shows the Ashburnham railyard where a condominium development has begun. The grader is making a hill in the foreground. Behind is the former St. Joseph’s Hospital, and a large crane marking a third of four current apartment developments in Ashburnham. These are exciting times.

Trent Valley Archives is planning more Zoom talks for its members continuing a tradition that began with last year’s AGM. So far there have been talks by Elwood H. Jones, the archivist, on what’s new at Trent Valley Archives and research opportunities in our collections. His talks so far have been on the building of the Ashburnham Bridge aka Hunter Street Bridge, on rich additions to Quaker Oats and on a household account books containing great records of a local family headed by Mary Woods (nee Edwards). His next one will be on streetcars in Peterborough, tentatively expected in August.

As well, Zoom presentations have focused on photographs. Heather Aiton Landry, the Associate Archivist, delivered a sparkling presentation on the interplay of fashion and photography in dating studio portraits. Fraser Dunford will present on local photographers. It has been known that sometimes the dating of photographs can be done by knowing when a photographer was in town or when he changed the lithography on the portraits to reflect usually changes of location. The Publications Committee is looking at suggestions for sharing our cumulative knowledge on photography and photographers.

## Digital Projects Directory

The National Council on Public History’s Digital Media Group is excited to announce the launch of a new resource, the [Digital Projects Directory](#). The Directory is a free guide to history-focused digital projects for students, faculty, public history professionals, and anyone interested in learning about history through digital media.

The Directory is designed to help connect researchers and learners with resources that can help them explore their interests, and to promote and share the wide range of digital projects in existence. This directory does not include all digital projects, but is vetted by members of the NCPH Digital Media Group for projects that are focused on the study or interpretation of historical subject matter, are open access, and are built with the intention of engaging a wide audience. To be included in the Directory, all digital projects must be open access and cannot be behind a paywall of any kind. The Directory is searchable by keyword, as well as by time period, geographic region, subject matter, creator, and other filters. Entries in the Directory also provide information about budget, labor, and the digital platform utilized by the project. This will make the Directory a resource for students and professionals at all levels who are interested in beginning their own digital projects.

Questions can be directed to [ncph@iupui.edu](mailto:ncph@iupui.edu).

## No Man is an Island

Elwood H. Jones

Some seasons change our connections with the world in unusual ways. When I was younger I knew very few people who passed away. Lately, it seems every day some friend or acquaintance appears in the local obituaries. Some of those leave more impression than others personally even though I know that many families and the life of the community are affected as well. At such times as these I am reminded of John Donne's funeral sermon 400 years ago that "No man is an island, entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent."

Some recent deaths have resonated more strongly with me and I extend my condolences to their families and friends, but also regret their passing leaves a great void in our lives.

Some had direct connection with Trent Valley Archives, some for very long times; others had great impact here at least for a time.

Donald Down (d 23 March) was one of our most enthusiastic military historians and brought that enthusiasm to our interpretation of lives at the Little Lake Cemetery for our annual Cemetery Pageants. I have known Don since he was a history student at Trent University, and was deeply moved by his recent fight against cancer. Happily he had a great support system. Our condolences to Mary.

Kim Krenz (d. 19 March) was a long-time friend, as was his late wife "Kate" whose enduring love affair with Italy still sparkles. Both were active with the Peterborough Historical Society. Some of my memories of Kim are tied to Lakefield where he was a flamboyant figure, who for nearly a decade wrote weekly columns for the Lakefield Herald, all sparkling with wit and insight. He and I worked closely when he researched the history of the House of Refuge near Lakefield, and where after Kate's death he was a cheerful resident, and a great host. His account became a special issue of the Heritage Gazette. I will long remember his outgoing spirit.

Doug Miller (d. 4 March) was well-known nationally for his contributions to bowling alleys, but locally his name is synonymous with lacrosse, and the former Miller Bowl was named for his father. Doug's father built houses and apartment buildings around town and served on City Council for awhile. However, his connection with Trent Valley Archives is with his remarkable collection of family history and memories, an inspiration still for aspiring genealogists. He is inducted into the Peterborough Sports Hall of Fame.

David Mitchell (d. 12 March) was a particularly close friend and has been a generous supporter of Trent Valley Archives. Our front entrance was the result of his and Enid's kindnesses. I consulted often with him and we have some papers relating to his remarkable 70 years in local construction. We had a feature article about David in the Heritage Gazette. His energies were also felt at the Canadian Automobile Museum in Oshawa, at Lang Pioneer Village, the Peterborough Museum and Archives, and at the Peterborough Historical Society. My condolences to Enid and the children, especially Bruce, a former student. As for me, I will continue to ask, "What would David do?"

Ray Rylott (d 28 January) was what I consider the dream volunteer. When he heard that we were hoping to get a

large format scanner for the copying of original newspapers, maps, posters and the like, Ray volunteered to build a table capable of holding the machine, which he built to my satisfaction. The scanner has yet to arrive, but the table has been a useful ornament to our processing area in the Annex. His enthusiasm was infectious. His table will be his legacy.

Paul Crough (d.9 February) was well-known for his 12 years as an alderman as well as a career at CGE. His obituary noted that he had been associated with Orfuns football and lacrosse. He was a veteran with both the navy and the air force. I thought that I knew him well, but clearly that was not so. Still I considered a great friend, but he knew Keith Dinsdale and Jim Moloney more closely and longer. He was helpful in the early days of Trent Valley Archives, and for that he will always be special in my memory.

Helen Hamilton (d. 5 February) was known to me only through her connection with Costume King and for her asking my advice about how to enhance the heritage features of her store in what had been the four store Lundy buildings at King and George, across from the theatres. The building is still a bright spot for me, really the only one of the four that respected its heritage. Some of her costumes were a real help for our early Cemetery Pageants.

Murray Paterson (d. 1 February) was a personal friend who I knew best on several projects at St. John's Anglican Church. He had a distinguished teaching career but was known to many for his books on teaching and canoeing. His book, *Seen from the Canoe*, was published in our Memory Series and is still for sale in our Books Shelf. It was through Murray that I learned that his sons were grading parking lots, such as Trent Valley Archives has, and Bruce Paterson has been doing our snow plowing ever since. It is hard to believe that I knew him for over 50 years!

John Bowes (d. 5 April) had a long and distinguished career in real estate, and my connection was comparatively recent but close. He wrote a book about the history of real estate development and the potential for the future. I was his editor, mainly for confirming some of the historical references, but I also contributed the title to the book, *Greater Peterborough*, and the introduction. I had other opportunities to meet with John and admired his enthusiasm. Much of my understanding about 1950s and 1960s Peterborough has been influenced by *Greater Peterborough* and by John Bowes.

Budge Wilson (d. 19 March) was one of the first people I met in Peterborough, but had known her husband Alan from my early year at Western and he was my first boss at Trent where he had a distinguished career in History and Canadian Studies. Budge wrote over 30 books, but was probably best-known for the prequel to *Anne of Green Gables*. This was a brave project as so many people have their own views of Anne whose fame stretched as far as Japan, and who was the subject of at least two TV series, and an historical interpretation on Prince Edward Island. Budge was in her 90s but only began writing books when she was 50, interestingly using Mount St. Joseph as her writing base.

These have been great lives lived and reading their obituaries has allowed me to be enriched by my memories and their experiences. I count that as remarkable.

## The Hunt for History

Nathan Raab, *The Hunt for History* (Scribner, 2020) Pp 251

The search for historical documents is often a key element in the lives of archivists and manuscript dealers. While it is rare at Trent Valley Archives, archival institutions occasionally acquire items related to their mandate by purchase from dealers or from auctions. Nathan Raab and his father, whose shop near Philadelphia is called the Raab Collection have dealt in archival manuscripts seriously since the 1990s; Raab since 2004. This fascinating book tells of Nathan Raab's greatest finds as well as lessons learned along the way. His experience helps others understand the fascination with original historical documents. For me, it was a trip down memory lane to some of my favourite stories about documents that I have rescued or found in catalogues and antique stores.

Raab begins with a reminder that white gloves, which can look impressive to the uninitiated, are not useful. Documents can be understood if one can feel the tactile quality and other special features such as the bleeding of ink. White gloves interfere with that. Far better to wash your hands and dry them.

His father's first manuscript treasure was a letter in which Theodore Roosevelt first used the expression "big stick" which he purchased for \$4,500, and after years of crowing, sold for \$200,000. He moved from his law practice to manuscript dealer, and it became the family business.

Another Roosevelt item was a letter written from Yellowstone National Park to his son Quentin in 1903; Raab paid \$7,000 and sold it almost immediately after appearing on national TV to the National Parks Service.

An early lesson: follow your instincts and do research on the item and its contexts. Understand value. Turn the document over. Look for connections to defining moments in the career of the letter writer. Understand the provenance, where the document had been.

Raab makes important observations suggesting that auction prices are only what "one person is willing to pay for one object on that day in that room. That is a function of the marketing of the piece and, sometimes, buyers' schedules and moods, the economy, and perhaps what sold yesterday at a different auction." His advice is to look with fresh eyes, as value could be higher or lower than the auction result. [57]

His description of the auction setting is quite helpful and he warns, "These events are not for the uninformed." He had an example of a McKinley letter that his father had chosen for bidding. Slowly the bidding went up in increments and Raab got it for \$20,000. This was higher than he had wanted, but eventually he resold it for \$60,000. What his father had recognized was the historical context with "Remember the Maine". His father read catalogues carefully, and often found "something hidden in plain sight." [61] His interest in American history was a plus.

One of the best examples of this was a letter relating to the Rosetta stone in 1801; this was the letter asking for it to be seized from the French, who had just lost the Battle of the Nile. But one had to establish the context.

He gives a detailed description of his first auction without his father nearby and he captures the atmosphere of a small auction house sale very well. He was there to get the first proclamation of thanksgiving, 1782, by the president of Congress assembled, John Hanson. For trivia lovers, the first person with the title President of the United States was not Washington but the man who presided over the Continental Congress, from the earlier US Constitution.

Raab discusses the history of manuscript collecting and fake documents. His father had built up an impressive library on both, and the younger Raab particularly liked Charles Hamilton, *Great Forgers and Famous Fakes*. On his first day in the library he was able to identify a new Abraham Lincoln fake.

The book is filled with interesting examples of his successful hunt for significant documents and collections and his ability to find buyers for these collections.

While very fascinating, the big lesson in the book is the importance of knowing provenance, knowing how books or manuscripts found their way to where you viewed them. At Trent Valley Archives we live on a more modest scale. I have been appraising historical manuscripts and ephemera for some fifty years, mainly to determine fair market value for donations so that donors may get income tax receipts. On occasion we have used outside appraisers, and I have done appraisals at other institutions. The same rules apply. One has to look closely at the documents, assess the route they followed since their creation, the quality and condition of the documents and the likely markets for such documents.

Raab's book has special relevance for me, but it is so well written that it should appeal to readers of the *Heritage Gazette of the Trent Valley*. It might be fun to write my memoirs of the life of an historian and archivist, even though none of my finds would get the national attention that some of Raab's discoveries received.

## Peterborough Doors Open 2021

[www.doorsopenontario.on.ca/peterborough](http://www.doorsopenontario.on.ca/peterborough)

Because of Covid restrictions Doors Open Peterborough is virtual and online. Four videos have been created so far. One is a tour of the Commerce Building at Water and Hunter, and features views of some of the artist studios. A second is a walking tour of downtown Peterborough hosted by Don Willcock in his Victorian suit. Don's chosen sites include the area around Confederation Square, around the former Brock arena, and the corner of Brock and George.

A third is on St. John's Anglican Church and features comments by Elwood H. Jones, the archivist-historian at St. John's. The fourth is on Lett's architectural studio which features commentaries by Bill Lett and by Elwood H. Jones as well as a tour led by Lett inside the building. The Lett Building was built in the 1950s on the site of the east half of the Nicholls and Hall building; the west half is still standing. Video discusses the Bank of Montreal and its earlier buildings, the Innis-Hall Department Store and the Bank of Ontario.



