



Shanty in Snake Island - Circa 1907

Osgoode Township Historical Society & Museum

Vernon School
P.O. Box 83 - Vernon, Ontario
K0A 3J0

Newsletter

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TRAGEDY IN SNAKE ISLAND

A story told by Michael McEvoy 60 years ago, to the editor of "Old Time Stuff" in the Ottawa Citizen. He was born in 1851, son of Mr. and Mrs. Thomas McEvoy of lot 17, Con.3 Osgoode Township. "I am an Osgoode boy and an avid reader of your paper. I would like to mention the tragedy that happened in 1860. It was a place that lies between the Old Prescott Road and Metcalfe, called Snake Island. It was a marshy piece of land covered with wild grasses, and swamp hay. It was well-named Snake Island and had a great number of snakes, some of them measured five feet long and twelve inches in circumference. A poor family lived in this settlement by the name of John and Sally - they were very poor and kept a cow. John was a man who could not see anything go hungry and knew the cold winter was coming. Sally was different and took things easy, but they always consulted each other in laying out for their requirements, so John told Sally he was going to the meadow to mow some hay for the old cow. John got his scythe sharpened, his lunch, his old clay pipe and tobacco and off he went to the meadow. John sized things up and picked out the best place. He was not mowing very long when one of those big black snakes bit him. A man going by saw him, bound up his wounds, but poor John died. Some verses were gotten up about this fatality and here they are:

She laid him out upon the bed
And a big red nightcap on his head
Right-toodle-link A-toodle-link-a
Toddy yea!

Sally dressed herself from head to toe
To Johnny's funeral she did go
Right-toodle-link A-toodle-link-a
Toddy yea!

And all the way she went along
Saying curses be upon that serpent yon
Right-toodle-link A-toodle-link-a
Toddy yea!

Now all you boys, a warning take
To shun the place of the big black snake
Right-toodle-link A toodle-link-a
Toddy yea!

Author unknown

EDITOR'S NOTES

Today as we enter the last decade of the 20th century, we stand in awe, as we try to comprehend the enormous contributions in a few short years, by scientists, Doctors, farmers and other experts in their various fields, to the betterment of the human race.

Our mode of travel from the horse and buggy days, to cars, airplanes, transcontinental flights around the world. Airplanes faster than the speed of sound, spaceships orbiting our planet earth to men walking on the moon.

From the telephone to radio, to picture tube, computer age Fax machines, satellites sending radio signals across this continent and around the world and today April 24, 1990 the 1.5 billion dollar Hubble Telescope rode into space aboard the shuttle Discovery, it is now in orbit 610 kilometres above the earth, there to search out for the next fifteen years, the wonders of outer space.

Medicine from homemade remedies, operations on kitchen tables, etc. to human heart transplants, eye transplants, operations performed by men gifted so by nature with the help of modern technology extend the life term of individuals and return the sight to the blind. The miracle of our times.

Now as we bask in the wondrous achievements of our time, let us for a moment take a "glimpse into the past" one hundred years ago.

Michael Daley

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THE STATE OF HEALTH IN 1890

Good health 100 years ago was the same as today, the physical condition upon which pleasure, success and happiness depends. The exigency of illness or disease threatened a family's livelihood and their very existence. Manuals on care giving found in the museum archives illustrate what was required to ensure preservation of every family member. From "Home Remedies for Man and Beast" published in 1892 (in U.S.A) out of 984,00 persons that died in 1890, 227,000 did not reach the age of 1 year and 400,000 died under the age of 5 years." The 19th century was well acquainted with epidemics: Typhus, cholera and smallpox. A care giver had to rely on handed-down recipes, good common sense, available materials and good Faith.

In Chase's Recipes (published in London, Ont. in 1881) one chapter is devoted to doctoring the sick. To prevent typhus fever Dr. Chase writes

"Take nitre (salt petre) 3/4 oz, oil of vitriol 3/4 oz, put the nitre into a teacup and sit it on a red hot shovel adding the vitriol 1/6 at a time stirring it with a pipe stem avoiding the fumes as they rise, but letting them rise to fumigate a room 12' x 16'. Dr. J.C. Smith is said to have received 5000 pounds from Parliament for making this recipe public."

Dr. Chase further recommends his cure for smallpox. He writes "When Jenner discovered cow-pox in England, the world of science hurled an avalanche of fame upon his head, and when the most famous scientific school of medicine in the world (that of Paris) published this panacea for the smallpox it passed unheeded....It will cure scarlet fever also."

"Take 1 grain of sulfate of zinc, one grain digitalis, 1/2 tsp water. When thoroughly mixed add 4 oz water. Take a spoonful every hour and either disease will disappear in 12 hours."

The "Home Cook Book" (Rose Publishing Co. Toronto 1889) devotes the last chapter to the sick room Their cholera remedy is as follows:

Mix in a small bottle equal parts of tincture of opium (laudanum), rhubarb, capsicum (red pepper double strength), camphor, spirits of nitre and essence of peppermint double strength. Shake well and cork. Dose: 5 - 30 drops every 15 min. for adults and 2 - 10 drops for children.

The Home Cook Book extols home made and natural remedies, that is, "God gave herbs for the healing of the nations." The cure for neuralgia simply involves making a poultice of common field thistle. The leaves are macerated and used on the affected parts and a small quantity of the same is boiled down and drank for unfailing relief.

The recipes would seem to produce a chemical reaction. To treat ringworm "put a penny into a tbs of vinegar, let it remain until green and wash the ringworm with this 2 or 3 times daily." To give relief for a toothache, "take powdered alum and fine salt equal parts and apply to the tooth and it will give speedy relief."

To treat a canker sore in the mouth "burn a corn cob and apply its ashes 3 times daily."

Dr. Chase vilifies the excessive use of spirits but as in the other books liquor is often a good portion thereof. A good liniment he writes

"Take 1 quart bottle and put 1/4 oz cayenne, 2 oz lobelia herb, and fill up bottle with whiskey. In two weeks it is ready, good for cuts, bruises, strains, sprains. Will heal cuts in the feet of oxen or horses without stopping them from labour."

On the other hand, Dr. Chase recommends this Composition powder for various illness including dyspepsia and drunkenness. "Take Bayberry bark 2 lbs. hemlock bark 1 lb, cayenne pepper 2 oz, ginger root 1 lb, cloves 2 oz all pulverized and mixed well. Dose: 1/2 spoon plus 1 spoon of sugar in a teacup filled with hot water or milk. It will settle a dyspeptic stomach and bowels or is a perfect cure for drunkenness, when taken 2 or 3 times daily will cure false and unnatural cravings."

The state of being healthy, opposite to the presence of disease, was in a different plane 100 years ago. Health always has a bearing in daily life but it appears that 100 years ago it was necessary to deal with the illness directly with whatever means were available.

Ann Leighton-Kyle

NOTES OF INTEREST FROM 1890

Receipt for promissory note dated March 5, 1890, Metcalfe

One year after date I promise to pay to the order of the building committee of the Trustee Board of the Methodist Parsonage, Metcalfe, Ontario the sum of twenty dollars with interest at 7 percent per annum until paid. (signed) Lewis Howes

Born

Nellie Gertrude Gray on Jan. 31, 1890 at Metcalfe. Daughter of John and Elizabeth McCormick. Taught school in New Osgoode, Sask. married 1913 to Richard Arthur Howes. Their farm was known as Spruce Haven in New Osgoode, Sask. died Sept. 15, 1935 at New Osgoode, Sask.

Bessie Howes Windsor

Born

Florence Patton on Feb. 17, 1890
Married Alex Kennedy was mother of Isobel Lewis

Built

Herberts school SS No. 4 built in 1890

HISTORICAL SOCIETY NOTES

On February 23, the Society lost another of its Charter Members and long-time supporters. J. Herbert Stewart died in a Toronto Hospital where he had been ill for a short time. He was born at Enniskerry (then Dawson) in 1904 when his father was the cheesemaker there. He attended the Dalmeny Public School where his mother, Helen Meldrum had taught before her marriage. Herb established his STEWART EDUCATIONAL TOURS and later Tours for STO (Superannuated Teachers of Ontario).

In 1978 there was a Scottish Heritage Tour arranged for our Historical Society that was heavily subsidized by Herb himself. As well, he contributed money to purchase various display pieces of furniture for the Museum. When he wrote his book Tales of a Travelling Man, he donated \$1000 worth of books to the Society. When his youngest brother Archie and wife Iris were tragically killed, he sent money to be used as a memorial.

A card was sent at the time of Herb's funeral stating that "Friends of the Tour and the Society" were planning to make donations to the Historical Society to be used for a display case in his memory. Already, more than \$100 has been received. Receipts for income tax purposes will be forwarded. Elizabeth Stuart

MONTHLY SPEAKERS

We acknowledge with thanks the following speakers for the past few months who gave freely of their time to share their expertise and work with us in a most informative way:

October, 1989 Coral Lindsay of Kars for her enactment of Rodger Stevens, the first settler of Carleton County.

November, 1989 Mike Gillespie of Dalmeny for his presentation of the History of the Canadian Geographic Magazine on their anniversary of founding.

December, 1989 Doug Hughes of Dalmeny for his slides of Ireland and tips for "Looking up your Tree in Ireland."

January, 1990 Clarence Cross of Chesterville for his slides and "Walking Tour of Chesterville."

February, 1990 Keith and Audrey Last of Mountain, for their display of antiques and skit on "Evaluating Antiques" on Heritage day.

March, 1990 no speaker

April, 1990 Glen Vaillencourt of Metcalfe for his slides and presentation of "Architectural Restorations in Ontario"

We look forward to the May 1st meeting when Ann Jones of Winchester will present the Soviet Union, her trip and memorabilia.

FROM THE OTTAWA CITIZEN OCT. 6, 1890

About half past seven o'clock in the evening of Wednesday the tenth of September, a representative of the Citizen, while quietly walking along Albert Street between Bank and O'Connor on his way to his office was violently assaulted on the nose by an able-bodied smell, which he thought, proceeded from a gateway he was at the moment passing. Justly indignant at such rude treatment, he went on to his evening's work and penned the following paragraph, which appeared in the Citizen on the 11th.

"Now is the time for the health officer to poke his official nose up the alleyways and into the backyards and have the owners' accumulation of filth carried away. A walk along O'Connor, Albert and Slater and some other Centre Town streets will repay him, especially if he has a sensitive nose."

FROM THE OTTAWA CITIZEN OCT. 9, 1890

The Laboratory of the Inland Revenue Department issued yesterday a bulletin regarding an analysis of milk in the various towns of Ontario.

In former reports regarding milk supply, the particulars given had references chiefly to cities and larger towns of the Dominion. In several of these - such as Montreal, Toronto, Hamilton and London - the examination of milk is now carried on either by a special food inspector appointed by the municipality and working under the Adulteration Act, or by Medical Health Officers exercising the powers conferred on them by such statutes as Chapter 205 of the Revised Statutes of Ontario.

The following summary shows the number of samples taken in each of the towns visited and the number of genuine samples obtained, as well as those judged to be adulterated or inferior.

	SAMPLES TAKEN	GENUINE	ADULTERATED OR INFERIOR
Hull	15	10	5
Alexandria	12	7	5
Prescott	7	4	3
Cardinal	2	0	2
Morrisburg	9	6	3

FROM THE OTTAWA CITIZEN OCT. 18, 1890

Salmon have appeared in Big Rideau Lake.

Mike Gillespie

The following letter was provided by Audrey Graham of Metcalfe. She is the daughter of Stevenson Henderson and Harriet Simpson of Henderson's Hill just west of Metcalfe.

Rev. Orr Bennett
twenty-two South Drive
St. Catherines, Ontario

February 4, 1947

Mr. S. Henderson
Metcalfe, Ontario

Dear Steve:

It gave me great pleasure to see in the last issue of the Observer the account of the honour that had been done you on the occasion of a half-century service in the eldership. It was a rare distinction. This long service is something for which I am sure you are both proud and grateful. The testimonial, I am sure, is only a slight token of the obligation the congregation is under to you for this long faithful period of service.

Next month it will be 55 years since I was inducted into Russell and Metcalfe. The generation of that day, with the exception of a few of the younger ones, has all disappeared. But the work still goes on. The church remains unchanged.

Tough so many years have passed I have not lost interest in Metcalfe. I recall the elders of my day. When I arrived, the session consisted of Zach MacMillan, Dan Cameron and Alex McGirr. Then later elections brought Alex Dow, Sam Woods, W. Waddell and yourself into the Session.

At Christmas time I exchange letters with Mrs. Richard McGiffin (Lizzie Maybe) and received the occasional letter from Norman MacRostie. From time to time, I fall in with Mrs. Tomlinson (Consuela Morrow) who lives here.

Ten years ago I retired from the ministry and have been spending the evening of my life in this city with my wife. We have no children.

I have not robust health but I am quite as well as I have reason to expect at 84 years of age. God has been very good to me.

With all kind wishes to you and the Metcalfe congregation, I remain

Yours sincerely,
(signed) Orr Bennet

OSGOODE TOWNSHIP HISTORICAL SOCIETY AND MUSEUM
PUBLICATIONS AVAILABLE 1990

	list price	mail price
Map of Osgoode Township - 1879 with owner's names	\$3.00	\$4.25
PIONEER FAMILIES OF OSGOODE TWP. vols. 1 - 18	\$3.00	\$4.25
NEWSLETTERS- quarterly	\$2.00	
GLIMPSES OF OSGOODE TOWNSHIP	\$4.00	\$4.75
BOTH SIDES OF THE RIVER by Audrey Renton	\$3.00	\$4.25
THE MANOTICK STORY	\$4.00	\$5.25
FROM THEN TO NOW by Margaret Robb	\$3.00	\$4.25
MARVELVILLE by Margaret Robb (1988)	\$6.00	\$7.25
TALES OF A TRAVELING MAN by J. Herbert Stewart	\$4.00	\$5.50

125th ANNIVERSARY ST. JOHNS PARISH AND

MISSION OF ST BRIDGET by Michael Daley	\$3.00	\$4.25
NARRATIVE OF THE RISE AND PROGRESS OF EMIGRATION	\$7.00	\$8.50
RECOLLECTIONS OF VERNON SS # 20 by Isobel Lewis	\$1.00	\$1.75
AN EARLY ONTARIO HARVEST - Alice Markel Dow	\$6.50	\$8.00
SPRINGHILL CEMETARY RECORDINGS	\$7.00	\$8.50
<u>Recent Publications</u>		
OSGOODE TOWNSHIP "IN THE BEGINNING" ASSESSMENT ROLLS	\$6.00	\$7.25
PRESBYTERIAN COMMUNION ROLLS-TYENDINAGA, MELROSE & LONSDALE	\$2.00	\$3.25
BAPTIST CHURCH MARRIAGE ROLL, ORMOND	\$5.00	\$6.25
MARRIAGE ROLLS, OSGOODE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, VERNON	\$5.00	\$6.25
MARRIAGE ROLLS, BAPTIST CHURCH, KEMPTVILLE 1897-1912	\$3.50	\$4.75
UNITED CHURCH MARRIAGES, METCALFE, 1925 - 1957	\$5.00	\$6.25
BIRTHS, PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, METCALFE 1886 - 1927	\$4.00	\$5.25
BIRTHS, METHODIST CHURCH, METCALFE 1902 - 1926	\$6.00	\$7.25
BURIALS, METCALFE METHODIST 1902 - 1926, 1933 - 1962	\$5.00	\$6.25
LAFLAMME MARRIAGE RECORDS, WINCHESTER	\$5.00	\$6.25
MEMBERSHIP ROLLS - OSGOODE BAPTIST CHURCH 1893 - 1989 VOL I and VOL. II BY ELIZABETH STUART ea.	\$6.00	\$7.25
METHODIST MARRIAGES, METCALFE 1902-1912, 1917-1923	\$6.00	\$7.25
KEMPTVILLE ADVANCE 1891 - BIRTHS, DEATHS, MARRIAGES	\$4.00	\$5.25
KEMPTVILLE ADVANCE 1892 - BIRTHS, DEATHS, MARRIAGES	\$4.00	\$5.25
KEMPTVILLE ADVANCE 1893 - BIRTHS, DEATHS, MARRIAGES	\$4.00	\$5.25
KEMPTVILLE ADVANCE 1894 - BIRTHS, DEATHS, MARRIAGES	\$4.00	\$5.25
KEMPTVILLE ADVANCE 1895 - BIRTHS, DEATHS, MARRIAGES	\$4.00	\$5.25
KEMPTVILLE ADVANCE 1896-97 -BIRTHS,DEATHS,MARRIAGES	\$4.00	\$5.25
KEMPTVILLE ADVANCE 1900 - BIRTHS, DEATHS, MARRIAGES	\$4.00	\$5.25
KEMPTVILLE ADVANCE 1901 - BIRTHS, DEATHS, MARRIAGES	\$4.00	\$5.25
KEMPTVILLE ADVANCE 1902 - BIRTHS, DEATHS, MARRIAGES	\$4.00	\$5.25

TOWNSHIP NEWS FOUND IN THE KEMPTVILLE ADVANCE 1900

The following excerpts were found by Shirley Lowe while gleaning the microfilms for births, deaths and marriages. The Kemptville Advance is some of the many microfilms available for research at the Museum and Archive.

Jan. 25, 1900 Vernon now has a Justice of the Peace, Joseph Taylor having been appointed to that honourable position by the Provincial Government to that office. We feel satisfied that Mr. Taylor will in every particular perform his duties to the satisfaction of all and the street bums will have to turn over a new leaf.

Feb. 1, 1900 The enterprising teacher of No. 8 (Vernon has opened up a night school reading. Short hand writing are the principle teachings. This is a long felt want in this section and we trust that a great deal of good may be done.

The old veterans of the Fenian raid of '69-70 are receiving their medals. Among those who have already received theirs are Color Sergt. Kennedy, Sergt. Cook and Lieut. Crerar of No. 9 Coy, 43 Batt. As soon as all the heroes receive their medals, it is expected that a grand banquet will be held in Vernon to honour the old boys.

Feb. 15, 1900 W. H. Otto, Osgoode caught 32 foxes this winter.

Rumour has it that Vernon is to be blessed with another general store and that the old Campbell block has been leased for that purpose. The management of the new store will be under the control of that enterprising and popular gentleman, Arthur Dalglish and we feel safe in saying that everything will be carried out to the entire satisfaction of the general public. We wish Mr. Dalglish every success in his new and well planned enterprise.

March 1, 1900 Auction sales are now the order of the day around Vernon. A number of our farmers have fell victims to the Manitoba fever and we are about to lose a goodly number of our well known residents at an early date.

The citizens of Vernon are on their high horse at the proposed line of railway through this section. However if the citizens of Vernon would only keep quiet this new line of travel might benefit them, but so sure as Vernon has anything to say in the matter the proposition must, as all others, fall to the ground.

A load of our citizens drove to the residence of W. Porteous on Monday evening to bid farewell to Miss Christy Porteous who left next day for Winnipeg. The all enjoyed themselves to the music of both bagpipes and violin, and after a pleasant night's fun returned home well satisfied with the evening's entertainment.

March 15, 1900 Lorne Campbell left for Hartney, Man.

P.A. Bowen will leave for Carberry, Man.

J.L. Campbell of Green Valley Stock Farm expects to leave our midst shortly to accept a position with a Toronto firm.

J.M. Campbell and family will leave on Saturday for Hartney, Manitoba.

March 29, 1900 It is rumoured that the citizens of Vernon are about to arrange for a patriotic concert and as other parts of the Dominion have done, mark their appreciation of the magnificent bravery of the Canadians in South Africa. We feel safe in saying that the hall will be filled to overflowing and everybody will do their utmost to make the affair a grand success.

April 5, 1900 Nearly 900 settlers arrived at Winnipeg on Sunday from the east and south. The rush to the west promises to exceed any previous year.

April 12, 1900 One of the biggest day's wood sawing that is recorded in this vicinity for some time was done by Robt Stewart for Wm Logan on Friday last when they sawed 115 cords of soft wood.

Wm Carson of Guelph Agricultural College will arrive in a few days to take charge of the Globe cheese factory (Vernon).

April 26, 1900 John Saunders of Osgoode is said to have sawed 125 cords of wood at Frank Arcand's one day last week, which is considered the best done in this section.

A very large proportion of the farmers in this locality (Vernon) are on their high horses at the proposed drainage of the Castor river. This undertaking cannot begin too soon as the farms along the river are nearly covered with water.

Thos Bow who has been a long and highly respected citizen of our village, carrying on a successful general store business, intends holding a sale disposing of his entire stock at bargain prices. Being desirous of joining his family who now reside in Kemptville, will sell or rent his fine stone premises. There are rooms over the store to live in and a first class storehouse attached. This is a rare chance for an enterprising young man to open out in the old business stand.

April 8, 1909 Mr Jas Donaldson, general merchant of Dalmeny has sold his stock to Miss Kate McDiarmid who has taken possession already in the old stand. We wish Miss McDiarmid every success.

April 29, 1909 There are 25 men at work in the mills in Vernon.

Mr. B. Moses is busy loading cars with cheese boxes and banana baskets this week.

May 20, 1909 West Osgoode Cheese Factory lately bought off Mr. Campbell of Ormond is in full progress with Mr. Lorne Lindsay of Kars as cheese-maker.

Mr. Jos Moses of West Osgoode was in Kemptville contracting with the McMaster Lumber Co for woodwork for his new concrete dwelling.

June 10, 1909 Mr. Duncan Kennedy intends erecting a new dwelling house on Dominion Ave. in Vernon.

Dr. Ballantyne has purchased the Campbell property in Vernon.

June 24, 1909 Mr. Jas Mantil of Brownville, N.Y. returned to visit friends in Dawson.

Oct. 21, 1909 The Osgoode mail automobile running out of Ottawa now leaves the capital at four o'clock instead of five and stays overnight at Vernon and returning in the morning, takes on mail at Metcalfe at eight o'clock.

Nov. 11, 1909 Metcalfe business men are talking up a rural telephone system and think it will likely be a success. They expect to secure the privilege of using the posts of the Bell Telephone Co.

Dec. 2, 1909 Mr. D.F. Woods intends moving his Photo Studio from Metcalfe to Chrysler. He will be accompanied by his sisters.

Dec. 9, 1909 The name of Dawson P.O. has been changed to Enniskerry which it shall retain in future.