



Kenmore Continuation School

Osgoode Township Historical Society & Museum

Vernon School

P.O. Box 83 - Vernon, Ontario

Newsletter

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Along the western border of our Township is a part of the Rideau Waterway, and 150 years ago there was intense activity in that area. The Canal that was constructed from Kingston to Bytown influenced the settlement and the prosperity of the whole of Osgoode Township. It was along the Rideau that the earliest Land Surveying had been carried out and the land allotted, the Broken Front and the First Concession being taken together. As early as 1799 the Prominent Dr. Solomon Jones had received 700 acres which was willed to his daughter. The very old stately stone Jones' home near Prescott has recently become a Heritage Home and Museum. But our earliest Assessment Rolls show no permanent inhabitants in the western half of the Township. No doubt some squatters would avail themselves of the opportunity to establish a Pioneer Shanty along the river that teemed with fish and supplied fur-bearing animals.

Osgoode Township must have been a very lonely place 150 years ago. The Assessment, taken with Gloucester, and approved June 15, 1830, listed the following 14 Heads of Households. After each name is the lot, the concession, and the number of acres cleared. Most lots were 200 acres and in some cases neighbouring lots were acquired.

OSGOODE

Arch'd McDonell	25, 26 /8 - 40	Peter McEwen	35 /9 - 0
	18, 20, 21 /7 - 0	Duncan McNab	39 /9 - 0
	20 /6 - 0	William York	21 /9 - 36
Adam McCrostie	23 /6 - 0	Robert Grant	25 /10- 15
Felix Donely	27 /7 - 2	Rich'd Hall	19 /9 - 20
Alex McLoren	38 /8 - 0	Samuel Loney	17 /9 - 12
Collins Campbell	36 /9 - 0	Duncan McMartin	16, 17 /6 - 0
Donald McLarren	37 /9 - 0	William Page (50 ac)	1 /6 - 0

All had settled near one of the numerous branches of the Castor and its many creeks, and no doubt the number of acres cleared is an indication of the time already spent in the area. There was one lonely horse owned by Wm York; four team of oxen, the property of McDonell, York, McCrostie, and Hall. Three families, those of McDonell, York and Loney had a one-storey square-timber home. Milk was supplied by 23 cows, and there were 9 young cattle. Colin Campbell, Peter McEwen, Donald McLarren, and Duncan McNab each had one milk cow. Where did they get them? Where did they keep them? And what did they feed them?

Of these 14 families, descendants of 2 of them are on the same property as their ancestors. John Loney lives in the fine stone home built 1850, and still makes maple syrup. John is a son of Wm Richard, a son of John who was a son of Samuel born 1802 and his wife Mary Farlinger. Samuel was a son of William and Eleanor Fitzpatrick Loney, both of U.E. stock. John and Elizabeth Loney received land in Charlottenburg in 1784, John having served in the ROYAL REGIMENT OF NEW YORK. The 100's of descendants of the first John Loney can all write U.E. after their names. Many of the family are recorded in the 1851 Census of Charlottenburg. We are looking forward to the Bicentennial of the beginning of Canada (apart from the USA) in 1984.

Lynden McEwen lives on the west ½ of lot 35 con 9 in a house built a piece back from the original shanty close to the river. It was on part of this lot that the second and third building for School Section #12 - The Scotch School - was erected. Lynden is the son of George Wellington who was the son of Peter who was the son of Peter who got the present lot on January 1, 1830.

There is little wonder that there was a community known as YORK'S CORNERS. The present road east and west through Metcalfe, Regional Road 6, divides the Township approximately in half. Lot 20 is on the north, lot 21 on the south. In 1839 William York Sr owned 21 /9 with 60 acres cleared; William Jr was on 21 /10; Thomas was on 22 /9 and George on 22 /10. Next to George, on 23 /10, was Arch'd Loucks who married Margaret Amelia McDonell. Robert Grant had picked up 24 /10 and Duncan Cameron was

living on the w $\frac{1}{2}$ lot 25 /9. Descendants of Duncan, Elizabeth and Louise Cameron, wonder why the name TWIGS FROM THE OAK was attached to the Grant property instead of to that of the Camerons, the Oak being part of the Cameron Crest.

In 1830 we see the unfamiliar name, William Page, previously assessed in Gloucester. Does anyone know this family? In Catharine McDonnell's Will, signed 1862, she names the 12 children of the late Arch'd and herself: Alexander, Duncan, John, Allen Samuel, Neil George, Daniel, Charles, Margret Rattray, Ann Marshall, Mary Jane Page, Janet Baker, Susan Elizabeth McDonnell. As yet we have no information on Ann Marshall or Mary Jane Page.

There are no Assessment Rolls for the important years 1832, 1833, 1834. We are happy to find any information regarding the large group that came into the Township during this period. The first person recorded in the west half of the Township was Robert Marlin on 42 /2. It was from his lot that Reids Mills Cemetery was begun. And he gave, as well, property on which the first Presbyterian Church was erected. It was in 1838 that a group, mainly Irish, came in on the 4th and 5th concession. Daniel O'Connor and Joseph Lafontaine had each cleared 3 acres, but John Fegan, Patrick Kilfoyle, Sylvester Doyle, Thomas Cangla, Alexander Herbut, Bernard Sharen, and John Birmingham had as yet no land cleared. Some of them had been living in Gloucester previous to this time. William Kelly, as well as having w $\frac{1}{2}$ lot 40 /6 where he had cleared 8 stony acres, later bought E $\frac{1}{2}$ lot 19 /7 and the next year w $\frac{1}{2}$ 20 /8, the property on which the Township Hall stands. The E $\frac{1}{2}$ of this lot was owned by an Alexander McDonnell and his wife Isabel Kennedy. Thomas Kennedy lived east of them. Who was this Alexander McDonnell? Isabel was a widow in 1839 and there is a tombstone in St. Catherine's Cemetery that shows that Alexander was born about 10 years before Arch'd. Neither were actually buried where their monument stands since the first Burial Ground was beside the first Church on Catharine's lot 20 /6. The U.E. List names three children of Alexander McDonnell commonly called "The King's Son", and Alexander is one of the names. But the same list omits the name of John who lived for a time in Osgoode Township. From the Township papers we have:

John McDonnell, son of the late Alexander McDonnell, commonly called "The King's Son" granted lot 19 in con 6. Order in Council 10 Apr. 1823.

Catherine McDonnell, wife of Arch'd McDonnell, and daughter of Alexander McDonnell commonly called "The King's Son" granted lot 20 con 6. O.C.22 May 1823.

Janet McMillan widow of the late Alexander McMillan, daughter of the late Alexander McDonnell commonly called "The King's son", and wife of Duncan McDonnell granted lot 21 con 6. O.C. 6 March 1823.

This year, 1981, the Osgoode Presbyterian Church is celebrating the 150th year since the first service was held at Yorks' Corners by Rev. Lyle of Osnabruck. It was during that weekend in 1832 that Duncan Cameron married the daughter of Robert Grant. We have all been taught that when the Crown was allotting land to settlers that one seventh was reserved for the use of the Clergy and for Burial Grounds, etc. This large quantity of unused land prevented the proper building of roads and caused friction between those favoured Churches, known as Established or State Churches - The Church of England, the Church of Rome, and The Church of Scotland - and the lesser groups known as "sects". The Revolution of 1837 put an end to the practice of reserving land for the use of the Clergy. Coming into the Township as they did, mainly in the 30's, the Osgoode people had little concern over this problem and no Clergy Reserves were granted to any Church group here.

We have copies of three Petitions regarding the need for help in acquiring Church property. The first Petition refers to an earlier one of which we have no further knowledge. The Petition was dated Dec. 30, 1834, and reads in part:

"To His Excellency Major General Sir John Colborne K.G.B. Lieut Governor of Upper Canada... in Council."

"The humble Petition of the Inhabitants of the Township of Osgoode, Ottawa District in Communion with the Established Church of Scotland." Humbly Sheweth.

"That your Petitioners, warmly attached to the faith and worship of their Father's have, during their settlement in Osgoode, unhappily been in a great measure deprived of the privileges of attending on religious ordinances."

"That...they are desirous to procure the Ministrations of a Clergyman of the Scottish Church under whom they will be taught to "honour the King" while they "fear God".

"That it is only a little over four years since the first of your Petitioners began to settle in the Township of Osgoode and having to purchase their lands from the original nominees and others, render them less able, at present, to support a Clergyman."

"That... they have resolved to apply for a grant of one of the vacant Clergy Reserves as a Glebe for a Clergyman of the Scottish Church, and upon which they desire to erect a suitable place of worship.

"Therefore your Petitioners...pray...that you will be pleased to set apart for this purpose Lot 38 in the 3rd concession of the Township of Osgoode."

Signed Osgoode, Ottawa District, Dec. 30th, 1834.

Duncan McNab	James Grant	Alex'r McDonell	Thomas Hanna
James McDonald	John Grant	Allan Cameron	Rob't McNight
Alex McLaren	Thomas Yorke	Duncan McDonell	Donald McIntosh
Donald McLaren	William Yorke	John McDonell	John Wood
Peter McLaren	John Farlinger	William McGilvrie	William McEwen
James Andrew	Richard Heppinstall	John McDonell	Paul Drew
Alex'r Dow	Kennedy Brown	Rob't Grant	Duncan McMartin
Thomas Dow	James Busby	Peter McNab	John McDiarmid
William Brunton	John Cowan	Alex'r McNab	Arch'd McDiarmid
Zachariah MacMullan	William Watt	Robert McNab	Duncan Campbell
Peter McEwen	Robert Watt	Donald Campbell	Leonard Wood
John Rodney	Edward Whiteside	James Dow	John Campbell
Alexander McEwen	Thomas Cod	John Dow	Arch'd Campbell
William McDonald	Alex'r McDonell	John McNab	Alex'r Stewart
James McDonald	Duncan Cameron	John Mattice	John McLaren
John McDonald	Arch'd McDonell	Henery Hanna	Thomas Dow Jr.
	Daniel Cameron	Arch'd Loucks	

How many of this list can you identify? Three of the writer's ancestors signed their names - Zachariah MacMullan, Alexander McNab, John McDonald. The need for a Scottish Minister was understandable when we realize that many of the group understood only Gaelic. But there is an unusual spirit of co-operation when we note that the group included Wesleyan Methodists, Roman Catholics, Church of England, Baptists, as well as Presbyterians belonging to the Church of Scotland.

The answer given by the Commissioner of Crown Lands in Council, 22 May 1835 was: "Lot 38 is vacant... it is necessary that they should state what persons are to have charge of the trust."

John Strachan

We have found no answer and misunderstanding arose. Thomas Dow Jr. seemed to think that he had acquired the lot and cut the elms on it. Some of the Petitioners had assumed that they had received a favourable reply and ordered him to leave the elms where they were. A second petition sent in 1836 received the reply:

"23 Feb 1837 In the present state of the Clergy Reserve Question, the Council do not think it advisable to recommend and further appropriations."

This was the reply on all requests received after December 1836.

We were loaned a book that Keith Last had acquired, the record of the Legislative proceedings for 1838. From page 399 on we can read all the

APPLICATIONS FOR LANDS
FROM
RELIGIOUS DENOMINATIONS

The location of each piece of property and its use is designated. We note that the following denominations received property:

Church of England-Episcopalians	- 24 locations
Church of Rome	- 11 locations
Church of Scotland	- 38 locations
Wesleyan Methodists	- 3 locations

We continue to receive valuable and interesting information regarding our Pioneer Families. Volume XV will be printed as soon as we receive the story on three additional families. We have heard from Ruth Bowen of Edmonton, granddaughter of Lieut. Gov. John Campbell Bowen of Edmonton. We have wondered about the Campbell name being used. It is possible that it was the name of a Baptist minister who was at Ormond about the time of his birth. We know of another person who carried his name.

We have heard as well from Robert Allan of Perth who is connected with McNeese, Fishers, McLarens. Many of our families married McNeese girls from Balquidder. The Peter McLaren family on concession 8 is of particular interest to him.

Marian Read was commissioned by the N.C.C. to do research on the McVey family. Abraham Bradley (1830-1880) of lot 27 con 4 Nepean married Matilda McVey (July 9, 1833-Sept. 3, 1915) in Osgoode on March 31, 1857 and the couple raised eleven children on a homestead that the N.C.C. is making into a living Museum. The buildings are all of logs. Matilda was the second child of the family of fourteen raised by Stewart McVey and Mary Ann Carson.

We did not send you the 1980 Membership List. Later in the year we should like to prepare a list of the membership of 1980 and 1981 combined with complete addresses and 3 or 4 of the family names in which each member is interested.

We have begun checking our recording of Spring Hill Cemetery in the hope of producing as accurate a record as possible. There is still time to send in any information re burials not recorded on the monuments.

In a recent collection received of pictures belonging to the late Bernice Dow, we saw a picture of the old Metcalfe Public School before the extra storey was added and the Metcalfe Continuation School came into being. Isobel Lewis (nee Kennedy), a gifted writer of both prose and poetry has set down some of her vivid memories.

SOME RECOLLECTIONS OF METCALFE CONTINUATION SCHOOL
1928-1932

In 1981, the young folk take their high-school education as a matter of course. Those big yellow buses gather them each morning and swiftly deliver them to the Osgoode Township High School at Metcalfe with its many teachers, with all sorts of options to study, and where hundreds of students congregate. What a contrast it is from the way it was over fifty years ago when I attended high school in that same village!

To get into High School, we had to pass a tough set of Entrance Examinations sent out by the Department of Education and then only a small percentage of elementary school graduates had the opportunity of receiving any further education. Osgoode Township had two small Continuation Schools, one in Metcalfe, and one in Kenmore. Children in the western part of the Township could go to Kars. Village "Kids" could attend more easily, but from my native village of Vernon it was customary to "board" in Metcalfe or some other town.

Metcalfe Cont. School offered four years of High School, then called Forms I to IV (now grades 9 to 12) and there were two teachers and two rooms for this purpose. The building was red brick, two-storey, drafty, and heated by a hungry wood furnace downstairs and a wood stove upstairs, with no inside plumbing. The public school was in front, and on this site to-day stands the large modern public school.

Many times, as I looked from my classroom in this new school during my three years of teaching there (1967-70), visions of those unforgettable days were recalled.

How we were transported to Metcalfe is one of the most vivid memories. Tom Dalgleish, our neighbour near Vernon, offered an unique way of travelling to school for several of us "Vernonites." He wished to educate some of his daughters so he decided to drive us daily to Metcalfe in his little "Chev" touring car for 25¢ a day. That was quite an undertaking at that time, and he took seven or eight passengers. We were packed in like sardines, and there was plenty of fresh air for the sides of the auto were not glassed in, and for winter there were just flimsy "side-curtains" and no heater.

The highway was narrow but paved and usually bad in winter with deep ruts of snow and ice. Snow-plows were few but the drifts were often shovelled by hand, and a local farmer packed down the snow on the road with a horse-drawn farm roller. Few people drove their cars in cold weather, using horse and cutter or sleigh. Nevertheless, "Tommy" seldom missed a trip, nor did we ever have an accident. On a few occasions we slipped around when the road was glare, unsalted ice.

It may sound like hardship but it was a real adventure, and we learned our lessons well from the dedicated teachers in that small school. The students who rode in this early school bus went on to contribute in many ways and in many places. Helen Dalgleish, a nurse, lives in Florida; sister Jean in Cornwall; Victor Kennedy, Irma Allen Acres and Arnold Acres live in Ottawa; Cliff Folkard is in Burlington; and the late Finlay Stewart lived for many years in New Brunswick. Some of us, Allison Kennedy Campbell, Doris Dempsey-Morrison, and Myself have spent most of our lives in this Township.

I remember little Finn Stewart ("Microbe", we called him.) walking down two miles from his father's farm on the Dalmeny road to meet Tommy at my father's house. Those high-spirited boys used to enjoy jumping about in the crowded back seat until one word from the driver settled them down. I was saddened to hear of Finlay's illness and death last December. We often enjoyed talking of those long-ago days and we felt that no price could ever cover what we owed our good neighbour. Though our education did not come easily, perhaps we valued it more.

Beginning May 1, the Museum will be open weekends and holidays as in former years, 1:00-5:00 p.m., by volunteer labour. In the past this duty has fallen on the shoulders of a few faithful members. We would be glad of your help.