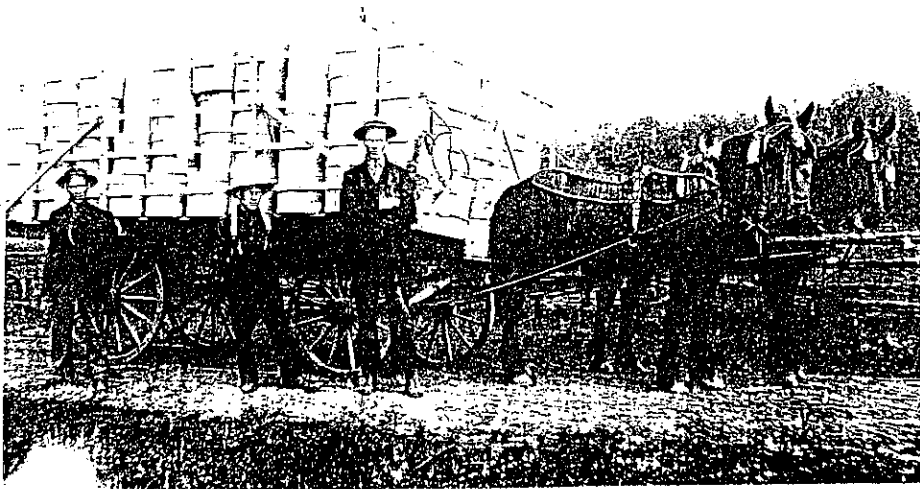


Osgoode Township  
Historical Society & Museum

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

— Newsletter —

Volume XVII 1991 No. 2



A load of cheese boxes from Carkner's Mill.

**A Glimpse Into The Past:**

The above picture relates to the Carkner Mill in Kenmore. Waterways were the only highways when our forefathers ventured into Osgoode Township. Kenmore was well served by the South Branch of the Castor River. Later this river was to provide the means of turning wheels in grist and sawmills, the source of growth in what became a thriving village and community.

Among the earliest area arrivals were families such as the Grants, Craigs, Comries to name a few. In 1830, John McDonald, who had been employed in the Rideau Canal construction, settled with his family on lot 28 con 10. Another early settler, and one who contributed much to the community was Squire Peter McLaren who took lot 28 con 9. He it was, who in 1857 was requested by the citizens to choose "Glen Lyon" or "Kenmore" as a name for the village. He chose Kenmore for his home in Perthshire, Scotland.

— Michael Daley —

**A Tribute to Frances M. Iveson (deceased)**

Frances M. Iveson, at her home on Thursday, April 18, 1991, born November 1899, the youngest child of Frank and Elizabeth (York) Iveson, a descendant of well known pioneer families of Osgoode, on her mother's side, the Yorks (the Springhill family).

On Frances' father's side granddaughter of Timothy Iveson, who with his two oldest sons emigrated from Rockdale, England, to Metcalfe, Canada in 1854, setting up a saddle and harness shop in the village. His wife Ellen Allison followed in 1856 with five other children. The business quickly expanded, the Iveson "Scotch Collar", famous for its relief to horses' sore shoulders, was shipped all across Canada. The shop was not restricted to the leather trade.

In 1870 the Montreal Telegraph Company opened a local office under Timothy's management. 1887 to 1920 the Bell Telephone Co. operated the same (in the same room) and yet again The Metcalfe Rural came into being in 1910. Frank Iveson took on the secretarial duties for the township in 1881, and later retained the office of Township Clerk and Treasurer for the years 1883-1922. Frank Iveson succeeded John Kennedy. A granddaughter of squire McDonnell was Kennedy's wife; R.A.F. Blair was appointed Clerk in 1922.

Frances Iveson, well known teacher, assistant principal at Hopewell school, and principal of Riverview school. Ottawa Valley historian and genealogist, former director of the Osgoode Township Historical and Museum Society, patroness of the National Archives, and Upper Canada Village, a graduate of McMaster University, Hamilton.

Recently I visited with Frances (1990) a visit that left me highly impressed with the manuscripts of genealogy that she had compiled, fascinated as she reminisced, of the years of her youth, growing up in the village of Metcalfe and like her brothers and sisters, Frances learned Morse Code and operated the telegraph key as a youngster.

Frances Iveson has left an indelible imprint in the minds of many, and the community in which she lived.

— Michael Daley —

**From the Kemptville Advance, 1913:**

Mrs. Timothy Leahy of Enniskerry is visiting her mother Mrs. McKenna at Burritt's Rapids.

Mr. & Mrs. John Daley of Pittsburg are visiting friends at Enniskerry.

One Hundred Years Ago:

At a special meeting of Osgoode Township Council, held at Cowan's Hotel, Metcalfe, 27 July 1891, a motion was moved and carried to let a contract to William Alexander to erect a town hall. The contract was for the sum of \$2450.00 and required that the building be completed by first December. It was also moved and carried that Mr. W.R. Doctor be paid \$100.00 for the lot.

At the monthly session held at Cowan's Hotel on 2nd November, 1891, it was moved by Mr. McEvoy and seconded by Mr. McDonnell that \$5.00 be paid E. Cowan for the use of the room for Council meetings - carried.

The following lines describe some of the events leading up to the decision to build a town hall in Osgoode Township...

THE BALLAD OF COWAN'S HOTEL  
(METCALFE - 1891)

The township council used to meet At Cowan's old hotel. It stood where the Royal bank now stands. You older folks would know it well.	"You promised to pay me well for the room, But you're many months in arrears. * And never have you or your stingy crew * Spent a dime on my gins and rums and beers." *
They met in an upstairs room at the rear Away from the bar room din. Where they levied taxes, and voted, and moved, 'Weath the roof of that famous inn.	* "Now your time is up, and your rent is due, * And pay you must, 'toot sweet'. * Then find some other place to sit, * For as of now you are on the street." *
They appointed viewers for fence and road. They hired bailiffs to lock folks up. But never once did that sober crew, Buy a single round, or lift a cup.	* The counsellors sat, their faces bleak. * Then Morgan rose, and shuffled his feet. * "You have stated your case both well and neat. * We must find some other place to meet." *
Well, it happened one night in 'ninety-one, As they might have known it would. In the midst of a meeting, a rap on the door. Then in strode Cowan! He stopped and stood.	* "If only someone would move right now * That we buy some land and begin, * We could have a fine, new brick Town Hall, * To hold our council meetings in." *
"Would you like to speak to the council, sir?" Asked Morgan, as only Morgan could, In a voice as cold as a banker's heart, And Cowan replied, "I would."	* The motion was made, and voted upon. * It was all duly noted and passed. * A lot was bought on the slope of the hill. * And a fine, new red brick Town Hall was built... at last! *
"For many and many and many a year, It's a fact that is well known, You have held your council meetings here, For you haven't a roof to call your own."	* "But what about Cowan's account?" you ask, * "Did he ever get his share?" Yes! They voted to give him a five dollar bill, And settled it, then and there.

(27 March, 1991)

Bob Usher

A Tribute to Bernard (Barney) Dewan:

An old quote, "You don't have to be a somebody to be important" - or should that read "You don't have to be important to be a somebody." ? Barney Dewan, born 1851, Lot 17, Con 2, Osgoode Township, son of Patrick Dewan and Mary McGee, a poet, wanderer, author of many poems, married Elizabeth Lowry, two children, left a widower at an early age; very little is known of this man or his family. Some years ago while researching the genealogy of one branch of my family tree. I chanced to visit an elderly cousin, Lettie (Dewan) McGuire, and in the course of our conversation this story she told of her uncle Barney Dewan.

After the death of his first wife, Barney left his two young children with their grandparents; he headed west, restless, and in search of a dream, but he knew not what. In his travels he met and fell in love with a young woman, but his urge to roam was still strong within him, promising to return in one year's time to marry her, he continued on his way. However, a broken leg delayed his return, and thence she was no where to be found, he married another woman. Eventually he was left a widower. Once again he returned to his nomadic way of life. One day, having entered a store in some western city or town, hearing the voice of a woman speaking behind the counter, he recognized as the voice of the girl he had left behind many years prior to that time, she being a widow, they were married.

Today as I delve through his manuscript of poems, one can visualize - like a slow moving film- his lifetime as it evolves in his written poems. From his school days at Herberts' Corners school house to his life on the prairies, breaking horses, harvest time, to climbing the majestic Rocky Mountains to going down the other side.

he tells of his cabin on the banks of the Skeena River, while the railway men build a bridge of steel where Legett Canyon raises her hand. His love of nature and wild birds singing, his first wanderings led him to the banks of the Skeena River where he found a lover true. Louisa was her name, through circumstance he lost her, her family moved away.

The years moved along and so did he, from one place to another he inquired for Louisa for many a day. His generosity to others less fortunate than himself oft times left him in dire straits. In his own words, quote "the truth to you I might as well tell, money does not stay with me very well." The following is one verse of seven in a poem with a heading "*Louisa*"...

*"To dream of one for forty years  
Is of true love a test  
Oh' Louisa could I find you  
My tired heart would rest."*

After forty years he finds his sweetheart, the following one verse of four lines...

*"Kind providence  
Arranged a meeting in a city street  
Gave to such love its recompense  
And to age a companionship sweet."*

In 1925 this roving son returned to the land of his birth to visit his family. In the twilight years of his life he continued to write poems relating to his family (his granddaughter-in-law, Mrs. Lester, among them). His wife Louisa, after her death, he wrote "*Farewell to Louisa*". The last verse...

*"Farewell to Louisa  
You are not far at all  
So near I feel your handclasp  
I am coming on death's call"*

Barney Dewan passed away Christmas morning, 1928, in Assiniboia Saskatchewan (?) The following poem was written by Barney Dewan.

**THE OLD-TIME SCHOOL HOUSE HILL**  
[at Herberts' Corners, Osgoode Township]

While I view the stars in Heaven	The Cangleys and the Hassets,	Now, Father Time has worn me,
As I lie beneath this tree,	and the Turners- George, and Jack,	And I slowed my step at last,
I think upon my folly,	* One day he took my marbles and	* While many a stormy siege I faced,
And what nature did for me.	* Threw me on my back	* And many a bitter blast.
	*	*
With the cold ground for my pillow,	* The Evans's and Sheazarns'	* Yet, while nature forces fancy
Here my brain it works at will,	* O'Rourkes' and Jordans' too,	* In the springtime or the fall,
And leads my memory back again	* Still linger in my memory,	* My brain is still in motion,
To that old-time school house hill.	* While time it does pursue.	* And will answer to my call.
	*	*
Now, how well I do remember	* The Wallaces' and Earleys'	* I climbed the Rocky Mountains,
My school mates one and all	* I see they come at last;	* And went down the other side,
And the hours we spent together	* But none that I have mentioned,	* I saw the Western Ocean
At marbles and at ball.	* Knew how my lot was cast.	* Where all was sea and tide.
	*	*
The Shields's were our neighbours,	* I now can see them jangle	* Just now the day is dawning,
But, now they're gone to rest	* For a button or a pin,	* And my brain is working slow:
In that promised land of glory:	* I now can see them wrestle,	* If there is something more to mention,
I hope they're happy blest.	* And wondered who would win.	* I will later let you know.
	*	*
Since I am gifted so by nature	* But, now those days are over,	* I feel that mellow soothing,
To write such little rhymes,	* With a few more left to fill.	* While visions around me creep,
I will not forget to mention	* I am far from all my school mates,	* Like the star that's disappearing:
The Finleys and the O'Briens.	* And the old-time school house hill.*	* I will soon be fast asleep.
	*	*
The Doyles I well remember,	* I wandered far from Osgoode,	* Two brothers and two sister,
And likewise the Herberts too,	* Where first I saw the light,	* At home they still remain,
The Daleys and the Darcys'	* In that meek and humble cabin	* While many a rapid stream I crossed,
They numbered quite a few.	* That I remember well tonight.	* And many a weary plain.
	*	*
The McEvoy's and Shannahans,	* Of all my blood relations,	* To my father and my mother,
And the Terrys' at the spring	* I have only seen but a few:	* That raised this roving son;
Where the blackbird and the robin	For many were there born	May they rest in peace forever,
I often heard them sing.	That I have never knew.	For the kind deeds they have done.

- B.M. DEWAN

(Skeena River, Pacific, B.C. - June 6, 1915)

## Notes of Interest - From "A History of Lanark":

Few, if any of us could possibly imagine how the virgin forests appeared to the first settlers, and there are very few first-hand accounts available. The following lines are from "A Pioneer History of the County of Lanark" by Jean S. McGill, and recounts the impressions of a settler in search of land suitable for farming. *"Canada abounds in rocks and stones in the township of Lanark and Dalhousie... you have no idea of cedar swamps but conceive Paisley moss for instance, all grown with large trees, some fresh and green, others half-rotten from top to bottom, almost as many lying in all directions as are standing, with not a living creature to be heard or seen except a bird or two, and the owl screaming in your ears at night."*

No doubt a similar situation existed in Osgoode Township, and it may serve to illustrate the formidable task facing those who cleared and drained what are now productive acres.

The history of Lanark mentioned above is a particularly fine treatment of the subject, well documented and with many excerpts from letters and diaries. Anyone with an interest in pioneer history would enjoy it. A copy is available in the library of the Osgoode Township Museum.

----- Bob Usher -----

### - Archivist Report:

Since the museum has been open on Saturdays for the fall and winter months, a number of people have stopped in to use the Archives. McEvoy, Cleland, Boyd, Lough, Liscumb, York and Skuce are a few of the family names being researched. Mrs. Joyce Dickens of Houston, Texas visited recently, tracing her York.

McCormick, Otto and Grey ancestors. She is planning to return this summer.

In March various university students were here doing research for their mid-term papers.

We also have received updated material on the family histories of Robert Kerr, John Taylor, Arthur Allen and Allen family of Mountain. Donations of pictures, documents and books were added to our growing collection.

Shirley Lowe has compiled the "Births, Deaths, Marriages" taken from microfilm of the Kemptville Advance, 1912 and 1913. This is in the process of being typed and should be available for sale by this summer.

----- Donna Bowen -----

### Recent Acquisitions:

Some artifacts welcomed into the collection were nine well preserved and useful kitchen utensils donated by Bob Usher. Two buggy seats still in their original finish were donated by David and Mary Ellen Heeley. From Lorraine and Dean Usher, a wash tub stand. Margaret McDiarmid of Dalmeny donated several artifacts, one of which is a Metcalfe Fair Prize List for 1946. Muriel (Blair) Cameron of Vernon donated 7 documents, six of which were deeds and mortgages and a marriage certificate all of which were local. Also, a number of books were donated by local libraries and a large number from Harry Anderson of Vernon.

----- Ann Leighton-Kyle -----

### Canada as it appeared in 1867:

Long ago in a far distant age, on the first day of July, 1867, the Dominion of Canada was born. The new country consisted of a 3,000 mile scattering of outposts and settlements and sub-arctic wilderness. It was the handiwork of an inspired group of colonial politicians as a solution to a crisis in their affairs, who used every skill of bargaining and blarney, private intrigue, and public campaign to complete the job. By 1871 when it took shape, except for a few that came in later, Canada was the second largest country on the face of the globe, 30 times the size of its parent. The house of Commons at Westminster was three quarters empty when it passed the British North America Act, though it filled up immediately afterwards for the debate on the dog tax bill. That same year, the Russian czar made a sale of Alaska to the United States, for the price of \$7,200,000 (two cents an acre).

What was it like? A nine thousand room hotel with the lower floors half occupied, the beams still showing far above, a bit of camping on the upper girders and a huge annex still on the drafting boards.

Unlike the nations of Europe, it was the kind of nation without a past, but created in a stoke of rational will. A century later, it still is extant, though lately it is threatened to be dissolved into parts. It had taken 40 years to establish a foreign office, and another 20 years to have an independent foreign policy, 90 years to form a supreme court, 80 years to establish Canadian citizenship, 98 years for a national flag to be flown and even longer to assume the power to change the constitution.

The founding Fathers met for five days in Charlottetown in September of 1864 and again for three weeks in Quebec month later. Many of them had never seen each other before. Others knew each other all too well, as political enemies. They were men of two races, five provinces, and several political persuasions. Yet they worked out the federal structure that made Canada possible, and found in each other the trust to go back to their colonies and begin the struggle that made it happen.

(Excerpts from "The Making of The Nation" by William Kilbourn)

Ann Leighton-Kyle

#### Letters:

Phyllis Campbell of Vernon (daughter of Robin and Violet Campbell) has a number of letters written in the last century - some from Scotland, others in Osgoode. Phyllis was born on the Springhill farm first settled by her great-great-grandfather Henry Robertson - a joiner, highly esteemed for his fine household furniture. Two sons, Andrew and Henry were carpenters as well. Henry married Mary Roy in Coupur Angus, Perthshire; settled in Springhill, and obtained work on the new Ottawa Parliament Buildings. As well, he began to build the new frame home where five generations have lived. Situated on a hill that rose east of the very low and large huckleberry marsh, this house impressed a berry picker who, on looking up, exclaimed "Behold! The Tower of Babylon!" The older generation still knows this area as "Babylon".

There are two letters written by Henry Robertson. The first in 1884 when he was age 67, to daughter Madeline - and husband David Cameron of Beckwith who had a family of seven daughters and one son! Their daughter, Mary Cameron - a schoolteacher- married John Campbell and returned to live where her mother had been born. Their son Alex Campbell and wife Alison live there now.

Phyllis Campbell has kindly allowed us to include the letters in our newsletter.

*Osgoode, March 15, 1884.*

*Dear Son and Daughter,*

*I now sit down to scribble a few lines to let you know that we are all pretty well at present - thank God for all His goodness to us. I hope this may find you all well. I am often thinking of you all up there. This is a beautiful day. I am always better on a bright day. I hope I will get to church tomorrow if all is well with us. I have not been there for a long time, the snow has been so deep. It is down a good bit now. We can see the fences beginning to appear again. Matt has got a stove in his house now and the chimney is partly built. He was away yesterday for bricks to finish it. He is getting it ready for the plaister in the spring so when you come down you will have one more call to make. I wish you could tell Mary & Janie (twins) to write for I know you have not much time for it. I am very glad they are all learning so well. Liza is not so fond of knitting as Mary was. I tell her sometimes she was far steadier when she was not so old, but she is learning well at school and she never says anytime that she is lonesome at all and she is going to stay till Janie comes to stay. I must close for dinner is near ready. I hope Mr. Cameron is better and may the Lord bless and keep you all in health is the earnest prayer of your loving father & mother.*

*Mary and Henry Robertson.*

Another letter was written four years later, in the fall of the year. Henry died in 1893.

*Osgoode, Sept. 1888.*

*Dear grandchild Mary and others,*

*You know that I am not good at writing letters but I thought that I would try scribbling a few lines to tell you that we are pretty well down here, hoping this will find you all well up there. I hope you are getting along well at school and that you will be out for a teacher next year. I suppose Harry Stewart and you will be trying who will be first when he comes up. I was thinking that if you or Jane or Margret or your mother would come down and bring Madeline with them that she would be the better of it and stop a week or two and eat plenty of good ripe apples that it would be good for her, and your Grandma would come home with you. If you or any of you would come down on the train we would come and meet you if you would send us word when you come. Come shortly when the weather is good and warm.*

I am in shop all the time making furniture. I sell some sometimes, but I get very little money, but it will come some time. I have a good many made. I have 2 like that Grace has, and I have some desks and sideboards on hand. John has his crops in long ago and all threshed. The fall wheat turned out so that he had of 3 acres nearly 100 bushels of good grain and his spring wheat was good but his oats was very short but his peas was good and his potatoes is very midiling. He has sown 3 acres of fall wheat and it is up and looks very well.

Dear Children and Grandchildren (from Mary)

I now sit down to answer your welcome letter and as father has told you most of the news I tell you we are expecting Andrew down in 2 weeks from now. And I think Madeline could come with him. The trip might do her good and I might go up with her as your father thinks I cannot live here in the winter for the house is colder then it used to be so I think if any of you are coming down send word what time you will be at the station and somebody will meet you and drive you home here. Our apples are not yet near all in yet. They are more than we thought they would be and plums too but I did not make any preserves. Some of the neighbours came and gathered plums but alot of them went to loss on the ground for the sugar was scarce here and the apples are easier sweetened. I hear Matt coming from the (cheese) factory. He is to be taking up his potatoes and I intend going down to help him while it is dry. I hope I may get a chance to post this letter soon. It is 3 days since it was started so I think I will make a finish of it.

Dear Mary, I think Henry Stuart (a cousin) will be trying with you when he comes up. He is good at drawing. I saw some of his copies when I was down there but he thinks you are too far ahead for him to catch up. He thinks he wont be so lonesome up there as in Ottawa. May this find you all well as it leaves us and may the Lord bless and keep you all in health and strength is the earnest prayer of your grandma, Mary Robertson.

(Post Script) Your grandma says that she could not live here in winter, but she says it herself and she thinks she will come up for she is warmer there than here. Be sure and let Madaline and some of the rest of you come along with her. H.R.

Grandma died in 1894. There was a granddaughter Madeline.

----- Elizabeth Stuart -----

- Metcalfe (Compiled by the late Frances M. Iveson)

Lots 12 and 11- North, purchased by Timothy Iveson; Lot 11, the old Iveson home, Saddle and Harness Shop in the east half. Location of Montreal Telegraph Company, 1870, Bell Telephone Office, 1894, 17 1/2 miles of poles Metcalfe to Winchester, no subscribers in 1895 directory. In 1897 directory - manager Frank Iveson, subscribers - Jas. Fraser, Dr. C. Morrow, Dr. D. Wallace. Metcalfe Rural Telephone came in 1910, Harry Iveson (brother to Frank) opened his harness shop on the lot 11 in Major Hanna's log dwelling drawn from Highway 31. Hanna is an ancestor of Harry Latimer's and commanded the Osgoode Unit - 3rd Company of the Carleton Blazers, 43 Regiment. Iveson property purchased in 1862. First shop located east end of Victoria Street in 1854.

----- Michael Daley -----

Kemptville Advance - 1899: (Compiled by Shirley Lowe)

**February 2:** Benj. McConnell, proprietor and cheese maker of Belmont factory, mid-way between Reid's Mills and Vernon, met with a serious accident on Thursday last. He was in the act of oiling machinery while sawing wood when his sleeve was caught by a cog-wheel, causing one of the bones of his right arm to be badly mangled. The injury was carefully attended by Dr. Earle of Kemptville.

**April 20:** Due to the scarcity of stock, Kemptville butchers have advanced the price of meat. Steak is now selling at 13 cents and roasts at 10 cents.

John Wright, an old tramp from Chicago was struck by a C.P.R. train near Hamilton but had no bones broken. He was well protected having on five pairs of trousers, three coats and two vests.

**June 29:** The tennis club of Metcalfe held a very enjoyable picnic in Russell's Grove (Kars). In the evening several friendly games were played between the visitors and members of the local group.