

# Osgoode Township Historical Society & Museum

at the  
Old Vernon School

## Newsletter

VOLUME XXV NO 1 MAR 1998

### President's Report & Annual Report - February 1998 by Doug Hughes

As we enter a new year there are new opportunities and challenges to be addressed in 1998. At the Annual General Meeting held on February 3, we elected the slate of officers for the coming year. On behalf of all the members I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the members of the Executive, the positions and the committees.

One of the major financial challenges of 1997 was the replacement of the heat exchanger in the furnace. At one point when it appeared that the Township of Osgoode would only pay part of the cost, so we raised an appeal for special donations from members. This appeal raised over \$1000, thanks to the generosity of the members. It was early in 1998 that we found out that the Township contributed the whole amount for the heat exchanger. At the February meeting members suggested that the funds raised in the appeal should then be used for special projects such as making facilities available to store the Land Registry Records for the Township when they become available in the near future. We would also welcome suggestions from members.

The past year was again had another busy one with many interesting speakers at our monthly meetings as well as six special events. The year began with a general business meeting in January followed by the Annual General Meeting in February.

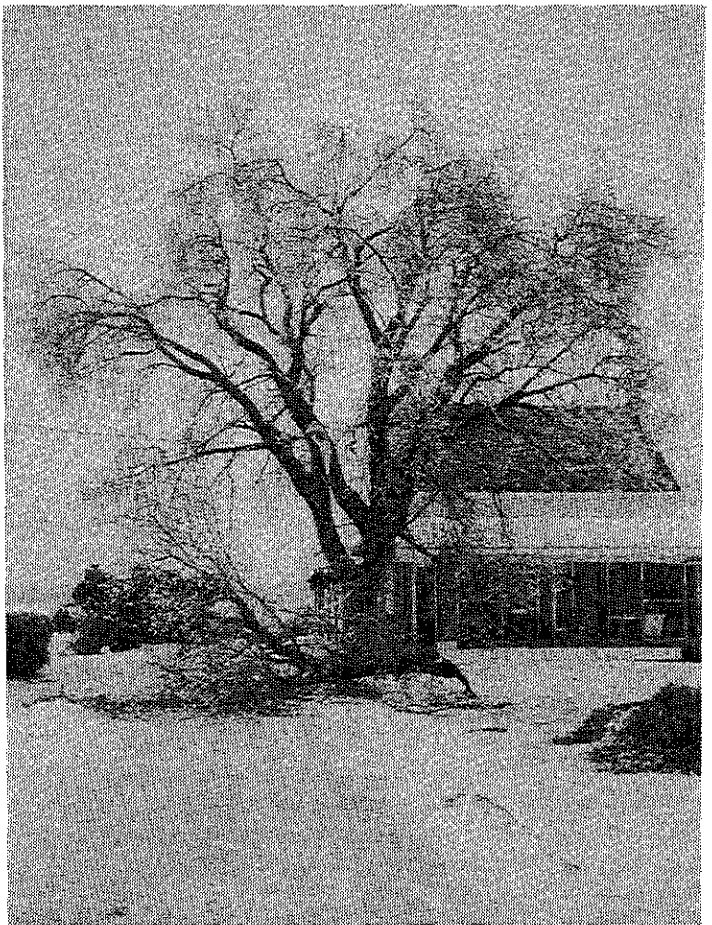
Special events included Heritage Day in February, the Strawberry Social and Pioneer Day in July. In November we hosted a Remembrance Service at the Vernon Cenotaph followed by a reception in the Museum.

Outreach during the year included participation in March with an interesting display at the Gene-O-Rama Conference of the Ottawa Branch of the Ontario Genealogy Society.

The Projects Committee continued to encourage and oversee the program of projects undertaken by the OTHS & Museum. Projects being worked on include compiling some oral histories based on interviews with senior residents of the township, expand our collection of historic pictures of the townships, create an Osgoode Township Book of Remembrance with the names and information of people from the township that served and gave their lives during past wars and conflicts. In the artefacts area we hope to continue to carefully expand our collection. One project could be more extensive labeling and descriptions for many of the items in the extensive collection.

We would like anyone who reads this newsletter to give us their ideas for any projects we could consider undertaking. Please send your to us at the mailing address given in the Newsletter or email me at: [DIHughes@magma.ca](mailto:DIHughes@magma.ca) Your feedback will be greatly appreciated.

(Cont'd page 2)



Ice Storm January 1998

### THE ICE STORM OF 1998

#### January 1998, "The year to remember."

Just a line to our members, across Canada, the USA and as far away as Australia. Yes we have survived the ice storm of the century that blacked out Eastern Ontario and Western Quebec. It left up to four million people in the Ottawa and St. Lawrence valleys without power including the cities of Ottawa, Hull, Kingston, Brockville, Cornwall and Montreal and small towns and villages in the rural areas. For some, two to three days, and ten to twenty-some days in other rural areas.

The massive destruction of hydro-lines, trees and some barns in the rural areas was most heartrending for man and beast. Public shelters were set up in many areas, with hot food, blankets and cots for many people. Many volunteers traveled the rural areas checking on people still in their homes. Power generators were sent into the area from as far away as Vancouver, Kentucky, and the U.S. Midwest to combat the crisis caused by flooded basements and needed electricity in homes and farms. Farmers from Southern Ontario sent truck loads of generators to be used on farms or where needed.

An excerpt from the Ottawa Citizen dated Jan. 10, 1998 reads - "David Phillips, Environment Canada's Senior Climatologist, says the dramatic five day deluge of icy rain across Eastern Ontario, and Quebec has probably caused more than one billion dollars in damage and displaced far more people than last spring's Red River flood in Manitoba."

A major disaster of this magnitude brings out the best and the worst in people, fortunately mostly the best. You got to know your next door neighbour. Most people with generators, offered to help their neighbours moving them from one place to another.

When the sun shone again (after five days) on the massive destruction, power lines and trees bent to the ground, or broken with the weight of the ice, was awesomely beautiful. It was also awesome to hear limbs of trees and sometimes the trees themselves come crashing to the ground under the tremendous weight of ice. When the power was restored on our section of road (after nine days of carrying water to the cattle, doing everything manually on the farm), the lights never looked so good.

Question: Do you remember the Ice Storm of 1942-43 beginning Dec.29, 1942?

Michael Daley

*The Ice Storm of 1998 brings back memories to many of us of their winter storms **Margaret Robb**, retired school teacher writes of the.....*

## BIG SNOW IN FEBRUARY 1942

Snow, snow, snow, but I do not recall much ice. It is interesting to listen to people recall this period of time. It proves that we each have our own memories of a particular time and situation. The year to follow 1943 certainly was an icy period. The year 1942 and especially the month of February is very vivid in my memory. We were living in Osgoode Village on Main Street, west of the railway track. On a Saturday evening, I don't remember the date; two gentlemen came to our door, Maynard McDairmid and Erskine Robertson. We invited them in. I presumed they had come to see John about some work.

I was on the point to leave the room when one turned to me and said "It is you we came to see, our teacher is ill and we hoped you could supply for a week." I hesitated but John said, "I'll see you get there and back if you feel you can do it." The two trustees went away satisfied.

Monday morning showed us nature had been busy while we slept. Everywhere was a deep blanket of snow. No telephone and knowing country children, always ready to face all kind of weather would be turning up one by one. I put a few essentials in a bag, leaving instructions for John to go to a phone and contact Bert and Anne Campbell that I had started out on my way to Dalmeny.

It was a beautiful morning, bright sunshine and crisp, and an experience I'll never forget. There was enough crust that you could step right along. I stopped to look around. Bright sunshine, so calm, not a sound, not a living thing in sight, bird animal or man. I didn't feel alone, I was in a complete, white, sun shiny quiet world. I really can't recall my thoughts. Everything seemed asleep, but now I remember a thought passing through my mind - God's beautiful world and I'm the only one in it. I realized children would be arriving so I hurried on. When I walked into the school, I was at home. Two boys were getting the wood fire going, they looked up surprised. I smiled and said, "I bet you thought you would be having a holiday?" They smiled and admitted this was the idea. I looked around the classroom - typical one room school, wood stove, wash basin and roller towel. I stayed the week, just really getting acquainted. Roads remained blocked, only snow plough I was aware of was Mr. B. Boyd's milk truck with a scraper on the front. However, roads although far from perfect were passable.

I enjoyed my week with Bert and Anne Campbell but at the end was informed the former teacher wasn't returning. I committed myself to the end of June. Transportation and roads still in bad condition. I boarded with Harold and Laura Ferguson. Another delightful place to stay. Snow continues and an enjoyment to children. They asked my permission to build a snow house. I kept a watchful eye. It was a danger if a child were inside and it collapsed, you couldn't save them. One morning as I entered the porch of the school, there seemed to be something missing. Then I recalled that I had noticed a Quebec heater but it was gone. I made reference to it when I opened the class for the day. Very quietly they informed me it was in their snow house. They didn't know it but I hid a chuckle. I don't know if they intended to light a fire in it or not. However I said I wanted to see it back in the spot where they found it. Not sure whether they could see my humour, but back it came. Interest in the snow house was lost and down it came.

One more incident that showed our isolation. I always took a walk around before I left the school at night. I noticed the snow bank along the fence behind the 'out houses.' I could see that children had been jumping into

it. When I opened the class the next morning I made mention of it and told them not to be jumping in this snow bank. It was right along a fence and could have stones piled along and this could be the cause of a broken limb. As you know children, we will try once more. Recess came and the class went out for a break and a break it became. One boy came in crying, all following, and looking pityfully at me, arm extended and bent in a bow. I knew it was broken. I groaned inwardly as I asked someone to go to Lewis' and phone Dr. Dowd in Osgoode, Making a silent prayer that he could make it through the bad roads. The wash basin was always on the stove and full of hot water. I helped to get his coat off, had him sit down and place his arm flat on the desk. The roller towel came in sue. I soaked it with hot water and wrapped it around his arm. Not being a nurse, this could have been the wrong thing. When Dr. Dowd walked into the room, I could have hugged and kissed him but you just didn't do that in those days. I said "I'm not a nurse but I used instinct. He smiled and said, "You may not be a nurse but you have done the right thing, you have kept the swelling down, now if you will help me, we will set the bone now."

Winter passed, I don't remember if spring came early that year in '42 but I was glad to get back to my home again. It was a nice section and I as always received as much from any children I taught as I gave. Roads cleared and all was back to 'normal.'

### PRESIDENT'S REPORT cont'd from page 1

#### Executive:

Past President	Murray Little	821-1698
President	Doug Hughes	826-2644
Vice-President	Don Lowe	692-3648
Secretary	Shirley Lowe	692-3648
Treasurer	Ann Leighton-Kyle	821-2301

#### Directors:

Fred Alexander	826-2018	Murray Little	821-1698
Jim Bowman	821-3470	Don Lowe	692-3648
Lorne Craig	821-2562	Harvey Linton	826-2338
Michael Daley	821-2054	Bill Zandbelt	821-2541

#### Positions:

Archivist/Curator	Donna Bowen	821-2407
Asst. Curator & Maint.	Bill Zandbelt	821-2541
Membership	Alice Craig	821-2562
Program Convener	Fred Alexander	826-2018
Newsletter	Michael Daley	821-2054

#### Committees:

Social Committee	Alice Craig	821-2562
	Edna Presley	821-3504

Publications Committee	Donna Bowen	821-2407
	Ann Leighton-Kyle	821-2301
	Shirley Lowe	692-3648

Projects Committee	Jim Bowman	821-3470
	Ann Leighton-Kyle	821-2301
	Doug Hughes	826-2644
	Bill Zandbelt	821-2541

Doug Hughes

#### OSGOODE TOWNSHIP HISTORICAL SOCIETY & MUSEUM NEWSLETTER

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## WHEN DID YOU LEARN TO READ? HOW DID YOU LEARN TO READ?

By Elizabeth Stuart

I expect that the teacher immediately put me to work on the first day that I arrived at the one room Dalmeny School after a 2-mile walk with others of various ages. After the Easter holidays in the year 1914, my cousin from across the road, Howard Stuart, and I were age six, going on seven by the summer, when we started to school. My mother had taught school, but my parents believed that it was better for the teacher to instruct all her students in the same manner. So I had no "Home Schooling." I am not now aware how the teacher taught us to read. But no one ever left that school who could not read. And during our introductory two months at school, the teacher would be giving special attention to those twice our age who would write the Departmental Exams in June for Entrance into High School.

But I had been learning other things during my first seven years. I knew the proper way to coil hay, stook sheaves of grain, put a chain around a huge stone so that the chain did not fall off when the stone moved. I knew the names of weeds, wild flowers, trees, birds. My mother had read Bible stories and Grimm's Fairy tales to us and taught us to sing. I could pile wood, ride a horse, back the new car out of the garage and patch a tire. I was ready to learn when I began formal learning. And I, like many others, am surprised that there are many in Canada who can neither read nor write.

Every census of Canada records whether or not an individual can read and write. I have found no native of Scotland who was illiterate. My great grandfather, John Stuart, taught school in Osgoode. His twin brother taught to earn money to attend University in Scotland in order to become a Minister of the Presbyterian Church. The Memoirs of Dr. Donald M. Stuart were written in 1895 in Dunedin, New Zealand, and he considered it important to tell about his early education in 1825 in a schoolroom in Perthshire, which, at the time, was without desks, without a blackboard, and without any formal school texts.

*"On the opening day, my twin brother and I were present with our 'brod.' That was a piece of thin board with the first leaf of the Shorter Catechism pasted on it, having also the alphabet in capitals and in small letters, and in italic, the numbers up to twenty, the letters for the chapters of the bible and the usual ab, en, it, and so on."*

*"I took my place in a class of eight - each with a 'brod.' The method was that of simultaneous teaching. With our pointer on A, we shouted after our teacher 'A,A', three times. The leader of the class was then asked to sound it, and all the others followed him in order. The first letter mastered, we went on to the second, and down through the alphabet in the same manner. In a fortnight we had acquired a full knowledge of the 'brod', and were then advanced a stage into the Shorter Catechism, which corresponded to the First Royal Reader in the education syllabus of the present day. In the schools of our order in those times the Second Royal Reader was the Proverbs of Solomon, the third was the New Testament, the fourth was the Bible in its entirety, and the fifth was "Barries Collection."*

*"At first sight most people would conclude that the Shorter Catechism was ill chosen to be the first reading book, but, as a matter of fact, strong healthy children of six or seven years of age soon learned to read it. The simultaneous method was used here as well. The class spelled the first word of the opening and pronounced it 'What', and the second word, 'is' and so on, and by the time we had got through the question six out of the eight children were able to read it with little hesitation. In the first six months the class could read the entire contents of the shorter Catechism, and had an accurate knowledge of the Ten Commandments. When the children were*

*dismissed to their seats, their occupation consisted in spelling and pronouncing each word simultaneously. Before the year was out I was advanced to the Second Royal Reader.*

*"The simultaneous method was employed also in teaching the simple rules of arithmetic....I have had considerable experience in the instruction of children," the Doctor wrote in concluding this chapter, "and I have pleasure in bearing testimony to the high value of the old-fashioned method which my first teacher used so successfully."*

I wonder if the class was reading English or Gaelic. I am not familiar with the Shorter Catechism. I believe the question was: "What is the chief end of man?" And the answer: "The chief end of man is to glorify God and enjoy him forever."

The students graduated from Croft Moraig to the Kenmore Parish School, two miles away, established in 1651. Graduates from Kenmore could attend any University in the world, usually with a scholarship. In 1650 the Government had ruled that there be a school in each Parish. There was a remarkable teacher in Kenmore, Robert Armstrong who had married Mary Mc Kercher and had 12 children. The father taught there for 40 years, 1788-1828 and the youngest son, William, from 1828 to 1873. A new Education Act was passed at that time. The oldest son, Robert, LL.D. from St. Andrews, started a boarding school in London for the sons of Noblemen, produced a Gaelic dictionary, and wrote the epitaph in Latin on his father's tombstone. Father and sons are buried in the Kenmore Cemetery. School hours in the summer were from 7 to 11 and from 1 - 5; in the winter months from 9 - 12 and from 1 - 3. It was through this school that many passed who settled in Osgoode, or who taught in our Universities.

In the following Newsletter, I wish to describe how our teacher in Kenmore Continuation School in the 1920's, Miss Tannie Fraser, used the simultaneous method so successfully in teaching us Latin. She taught four years of Latin in the first two years of school. And pupils got first class honours on Departmental Examinations. No doubt Tannie, and others of that time, sitting on planks, no blackboards, had been taught in Osgoode in a similar way. As a teacher myself, the longer I taught, the more I used modifications of the same method and used it with more classes. If anyone in Canada is illiterate, teachers are using poor methods.

### SCHOOL REUNION

**CALLING ALL FORMER STUDENTS  
ST. JOHN School S.S.#4 est 1890  
6631 HERBERTS CORNERS ROAD  
OSGOODE, ONT**

**The new owners of the former school are interested in holding a reunion of former teachers & students on Sunday, August 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1998**

**We would like to display as much schooldays memorabilia as possible. We are looking for donations or loans of pictures, school books, etc. Any memorabilia that would help bring back schooldays past.**

**If possible, please register and send your memorabilia before the 2<sup>nd</sup>. We will be in touch with registrants concerning time and other particulars closer to the reunion date.**

**Please contact:**

**Alison Whitlock  
Flower Buds Nursery  
6631 Herberts Corners Rd  
P.O. Box 144**

**or  
Michael Daley  
2100 Stavecch Rd.  
Osgoode, Ont K4D 1M1  
(613)821-2054**

**Greely, Ontario K4D 1N4  
phone: (613)821-4469 fax: (613)822-6340**

## LETTERS & REPLIES

The following is an excerpt from a letter received dated January 6, 1998 it reads;

Dear Michael

*As long time member of the Society I congratulate you on the effort you have put into the offices you have held. You were President in the late 1970's - and it seems as if you have been the Newsletter Editor forever! Not an easy job and I have been impressed by the variety and volume of material that you have published.*

*To fit me into Osgoode history - my father was George Herbert Taylor, brother to Jessie, wife of James F Campbell. Jessie was mother to Olive - and Olive was wife of late Harry Anderson. As a youngster, I spent a good deal of time at Uncle Jim's - or visiting my mother's people - the Reaney's at Metcalfe. My father owned the cheese factory just north of Vernon when I was of public school age (and we lived in Ottawa), and he made cheese at Dalmeny years before. In fact, I think he was born at Dalmeny. So I read the article A Walk Back In Time, Vol. XXIV, No 4, Dec 1997, with interest - and have some questions....*

In answer to Mr Herb Taylor's letter of Newcastle, Ont., I more or less rewalked "The Walk Back In Time" quoting Lot No, Concession, log cabins and who's who, and answered. Mr. Taylor is the grandson of Joseph Taylor, the barn builder etc. of long ago. He built the Presbyterian Church in Vernon, his name is on the corner stone. He sailed to Canada at age 6 years from Londonderry on June the 11<sup>th</sup>, 1847 and with the family was an adopted son Willie Taylor, age 4 years.

**The William Taylor Story**, from a letter dated February 15, 1998 follows.

John Taylor (b. 1799) with wife Sarah (b. 1796) and family, emigrated to Canada from Co. Tyrone, Ireland, in 1847. John died Sept 9, 1877, Sarah Dec 19 1880. He is called at times a weaver and farmer, both are buried at Spring Hill.

Two sons were in Canada already, James and John, living at South Gower, and they sent money to help the family emigrate. The letter - a money letter - was stamped at South Gower, U.C., Hecks Corners, U.C., and Prescott, Montreal and Omagh. The letter was published some years ago in an Osgoode Historical Society Newsletter.

The letter tells us a little about James and John. For example John boarded with the Youngs, got sick and then went to stay with Mr Allen - who may have been the doctor. Thomas Reid fell from his horse and had to be taken to a hospital in Montreal. Frank McFarland was sick, and in hospital and Mr. Allen went to visit him.

The Taylors were from Tullyrush Hill Townland, in Co Tyrone, near Omagh. Since all the above people were mentioned in the letter, to the people back home, we can assume that the people back home knew them - which is to say that there were a few people living in Osgoode at that time from somewhere near Tullyrush Hill in Co Tyrone.

My father, George Herbert Taylor (1880-1996) was born at Dalmeny, made cheese there, and later owned the cheese factory just north of Vernon. He and his niece Olive Campbell and her husband Harry Anderson, would talk about the family, and my dad would mention that he had two Uncles - brothers, in the Taylor family, and both names William. It was some years after my father's death that I discovered the following story.

I found out that the younger William Taylor was given, by his mother, to John Taylor and family as they left for Canada - and the mother asked that her baby keep his name which was William. He later claimed to be born in 1843 which would make him a little boy of 4 when the

family sailed to Canada. My grandfather, Joe Taylor was age 6 at the time - and the older William in the family was about age 14. Older William married three times, first Margarette Kerr, then Miss Gamble, and thirdly Mary Ann Taylor who is not thought to have been related. William died in 1911 and is buried in the Prescott Road Cemetery.

The family settled in North Gower but young William Taylor eventually moved to the United States. A young man, James Bates Taylor, who called William "uncle" went to school in New York state, and he would visit "Willie Taylor" at holiday time rather than travel north to visit his Osgoode relatives. John Bates Taylor had an interesting background, he may have been born in the States, he visited Vernon several times, stayed with his Uncle Joseph Taylor, my grandfather, - Olive Campbell remembered him - he became the Governor of Kansas - but that is a story for another time.

We know a little about Willie and John Bates as a result of letters that John Bates wrote to his "Uncle Joe" in Vernon, and some years ago I located and visited in Kansas, an elderly daughter of John Bates Taylor.

In 1923 Willie was sick and visited New York state for medical treatment. It is not known who Willie married, but he had two daughters - one an invalid and the other worked in Chicago. When in Chicago, Willie, his wife and John Bates would visit a woman called Mary Taylor, but no-one knows anything about this woman. In 1923 Willie was a successful merchant, living in Exeter, Nebraska.

In 1908 Willie returned to Osgoode for a visit, and wrote the accompanying piece that appeared in a Nebraska newspaper. The clipping was sent to my by a relative of Willie's who lived in California. I think she was a daughter, and her name was Mrs King.

Elmore Co., Nebraska, Thursday, Oct 8, 1908.

Mr. William Taylor returned to his boyhood home on the banks of the Rideau River, Lot 36, Broken Front in Osgoode Township.

### PLACES OF INTEREST VISITED BY MR TAYLOR WHILE ON HIS VACATION

As we proceeded down the river I recognized the former home of the wickedest boy and one of the best little girls in that section of the country. The girl of course was drowned (the bad boy rocked the boat.) A little farther on around a bend in the river, where is now growing a field of corn, is the place where the old shanty stood, where we moved to when I was about six years old. It was almost an island and the shanty stood in the midst of a small clearing; the river in front and dense woods on three sides.

There were plenty of deer, bears and wolves, a few wolvereens and once in a while was heard an unearthly scream that we were told was a "painter" (panther). By a misunderstanding the first night I was left alone all night and cried myself to sleep only to find in the morning I had left the door wide open. Here in the summer time I was in the water so much I came near being web footed, crossed the river, forty rods wide and forty feet deep with a piece of board under my breast, before I could swim a stroke and here when the ice began to form along the edge and the middle still open, the best fellow was the one who ventured out farthest, had we broken through it would have been all day with us, but I persume," a person born to be hanged can never be drowned."

Directly across the river in a small cleared space was a favorite camping place for hunting parties in the fall and for Indians at all seasons.

I once saw a party of Indians land there in the afternoon and while the squaws put up the tents and set out the dogs, the men scattered in all directions in their birch bark canoes to set traps for musk-rats and fish. Soon I heard the dogs after a deer which took to the water to cross to our side. The Indians kept on fishing till the deer reached mid stream, then the canoes headed for it in all directions and the deer was shot before it reached land. In less than two hours from their landing, the Indians had a choice piece of Venison



## MR TAYLOR'S LETTERS CONT'D

to trade for potatoes. Indians in Canada were both peaceable and honest and there is no truth in the saying that "the only good Indian is a dead one," if they are treated half-way decent.

Gentleman hunters came from Ottawa every fall to hunt deer. The methods they used would not be allowed now. A well bred deer hound will follow no other track and once on a trail will follow a deer all day. The deer come to the river to drink at night. When hounds get the scent the deer may run half a day away from the river, but either from thirst or instinct that the dogs will not follow into the water it eventually turns back and runs for the river. The baying of the dogs tell the huntsman when and where to expect it and it is an easy matter to be there. These gentlemen made a show of giving the animal a chance for life by not shooting till it reached land, but the deer had about as much chance as a rabbit at a "coursing meet." I have seen fourteen deers hung up in one camp all shot within a mile of our shanty.



Once on a raw and winter day when the river was frozen over, snow on both edges and "glair" ice in the middle, our dogs (we were poor enough to keep two then) started a deer and passed within ten rods of me. Where there was snow the deer distanced the dogs but on the slippery ice the dogs gained. They went out of sight across the river, the deer a little ahead. I had hardly got through telling the folks at the house and regretting that I had no gun, when one of the dogs came back and said by his actions "come with me and I will show you something." This is no nature fake, neither am I a candidate for the Annias club. I followed him across the river, up the opposite bank and a few rods into the woods, there lay the deer dead and the other dog keeping watch.

The only egress to our "Arcadia" was by river and by a very intricate foot path through a swamp.

Company was few and far between. People in such an isolated position are apt to get careless as to toilet and dress especially of children. I was no "Little Lord Fauntleroy" in those days, my full dress in summer consisted of a single home spun garment and it was easier for me to slip into the river or hide behind a stump when a canoe or steamboat passed, than to change my apparel - especially as I had no change to make. I never hid when Indians came, because except for the moccasins, they had little the "edge" over me in the clothing line. In winter I had more clothing but I could astonish the natives by my ability to run a considerable distance bare-footed in snow, or even on the ice, without any great discomfort and I can do it yet and I have never been troubled with corns or bunions or ingrowing toe-nails.

I was out of reach of school here, but I was taught the alphabet I don't know when and to read one syllable of words and I "absorbed" enough to read the Bible by "skipping" all hard words. Our library consisted of the Bible, a hymn book and a book of martyrs. As I never could sing, the hymn book was a dead loss to me. The book of martyrs was rather cheerful reading for my tender age, but the Bible, especially the historical and war-like parts was read so often that I soon recognized the hardest words by sight although I could not think of their names. I was pleased to read of how the Israelites used to smite their enemies. "Hip and thigh with a great slaughter," tickled at the way Sampson polished off the Philistines with the jaw bone, and the victory of the little redheaded "chiel" over the mighty Goliath. I considered a personal triumph. I did hear a few other books read, someone loaned us the "Arabian Nights" and "Paul and Virginia" and I walked for miles and back through deep snow to borrow a copy of "Robinson Crusoe." But time passed and I leave this place now as I did 52 years ago with feelings of sincere regret. Few things in this life we like to do, feeling

that it is for the last time.

We go now as we did then, about four miles up the river and a mile and a half back. Nearly as much woods, mostly beech and maple, but settled thicker and our house is of hewen logs, shingle roof and upstairs, - traveling in the right direction you notice - but best of all there is a school house only a mile and a half around the road and if we go through the woods and "tunnel" through several brush fences it is not so far. I have great hopes that some day my young ideas may have a chance to shoot, but I must reserve my school experience for another chapter.

W.H. Taylor

The following article was sent to me from a long time member of the society, **Len Lemoine**.

### THE CANADIAN

My great grandfather was one of the first, if not the first, settler in Nepean Township to switch from using oxen as draught animals to horses. He had the reputation of being an excellent 'handler' of horses - a skill that he passed on to his sons. I wondered why it was that he as a French Canadian would be the one to show the way to his mainly protestant Irish neighbours in the changeover from oxen to horses. And then I came across an article about the Canadian, a breed of horse that evolved in New France and was widely dispersed there. It became recognized as a breed as distinct as the Percheron or Clydesdale. Great grandfather would have known these horses in his youth back in the Sorel area.

It seems that in the 1660's the French Government under Colbert decided that New France should become a viable colony instead of a commercial enterprise run by a company of French investors. Control of the colony was taken away from the trading company and Jean Talon was sent out as Intendant to get things underway. The landholding seigneurial system was vastly expanded and seigneurs were put on notice that they were to take their responsibilities seriously and to get on with settlement and land clearing. To help attract men already in Quebec to take up farming under the seigneurial umbrella, Talon bought boat loads of single women from France. The church oversaw the establishment of family units and Talon encouraged them to farm making 'horned beasts' and other farm animals available under various schemes. And King Louis XIV for his part sent out 21 mares and two stallions from his royal stables.

King Louis, of course, owned some of the best breeds of horses known to man at that time. Those sent to New France were Barbs, and Normans, and others with Arab bloodlines. About the same time English King Charles II, a horse racing enthusiast, brought various Arab strains to England and from those the racing thoroughbred evolved. And in the relative isolation of New France with no further input of genes, those early superior strains soon became one. The mix of bloodlines produced an animal that had some of the qualities of work horses yet retained some of the speed and spirit of its arab ancestors. It evolved here in Canada and deserves the name by which it became known, the Canadian.

Over the years the Canadian has proved to be a tough, good natured, intelligent and physically quick breed of all-black horse. It stood only 15 hands at the shoulder but proved to have tremendous endurance doing heavy work. Placed between the shafts of a buggy or a cutter, it seemed to relish the lighter pull and with nimble but sure steps simply ate up the miles. Selective breeding using today's advanced



scientific approach could not have produced an animal better suited to serve the Habitant farmers of Quebec.

By comparison, the oxen that Ontario pioneers all seemed to start out with, seemed slow and ponderous. But they had one quality that justified their use in those early days. They could more or less shift for themselves. At the end of a hard day's work of land clearing they could be turned loose to forage for themselves whereas horses, by and large, needed better fodder and care. It was the dream of all pioneers to move from the slow-moving and seemingly dull-witted oxen to the quicker and more responsive horse.

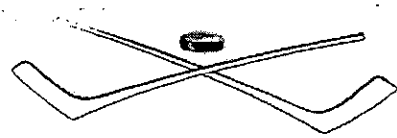
In the decade after the fall of New France and about a century after the gift of King Louis' breeding stock, agricultural *recensements* (censuses) were taken in certain parishes for the year 1762. These lay hidden on dusty shelves until those covering 45 parishes were discovered by archival staff in 1925. They revealed the widespread use of horses by Habitant farmers. Unfortunately census for the parishes where the Sorel Lemoines lived were not among those found. But in 1936 Sorel parish censuses for 1765 came to light and revealed some details of my great, great, great grandfather Louis Lemoine's farming operation. One of the details listed was that he owned a team of horses as did most of his neighbours. My ancestor Louis Lemoine (1727-1810) farmed 60 acres of seigneurial land and had planted crops in 1765. Some of the remainder probably was pasture and some of the planted area likely was given over to oats and hay for his team of Canadians.

I like to think that my Nepean pioneer great grandfather Antoine's first horses were an ink-black team of lively Canadians recruited from Quebec, and that people came for miles around to see them perform. And maybe my grandfather Antoine Jr brought a similar team to his Osgoode Township homestead. But there isn't a shred of evidence that either had teams of the only breed of horse that evolved here in Canada. Illiterate folk left behind few records of their achievements other than their reputations and reflections of themselves in their descendants.

Len Lemoine

*Footnote - This tough little horse known to many of us in the community as "The French Canadian" became almost extinct over the last fifty to sixty years, but now certain horse breeders are striving to rebuild the population of this sturdy little animal.*

The Editor



### NETS, POINTS AND ROVERS

Hockey was very different in the early days. There were seven players per team: a goaltender, who wore thickened cricket pads and gloves, no mask, guarded a shallow net (or "nets" as it was referred to) and was not allowed to leave it; a "point" who positioned himself 15 feet in front of his goalie and was given to lofting the puck down the ice to relieve pressure; a "cover point" stationed another 15 feet forward; a "rover" who stood just behind the centreman and played all over the ice; and of course, a left wing, right wing, and centre. They wore no helmets, often had magazines strapped to their shins as pads, and virtually no padding from the waist up. There were two half-hour periods, and the puck was "faced" by the referee (aided in his chores by a "judge-of-play") by placing it on the ice and shouting "play!" No forward passes were allowed, nor were substitutes, so exhausted players often got breathers by intentionally firing the puck into the crowd. Sticks were short, all one piece, with blades as straight as rulers. The wool sweaters were thick and equipped with turtlenecks to keep players warm on natural-ice rinks. Play, contrary to uninformed ideas about how clean "the good old days" were, was often violent.

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### JAN 25, 1912 - KEMPTVILLE ADVANCE

The Vernon skating club have opened their new skating rink. They deserve credit for building such a splendid rink. Mr Peter Wyatt has been engaged to run it. The hockey club held their annual meeting Saturday afternoon. The officers elected were: Dr Ballantyne President; D.M Stuart, Manager; E. Campbell, Sec-Treasurer; Ex-Committee - W. Allin, J.F Campbell and T. Allin. The players held their first practice Monday, 15<sup>th</sup> inst. Among the old players out in uniform were Howell, the old point man, Campbell and Bowman, wing men, and Stuart goal-tender. Some of the younger blood are making a fine showing and the club expects to put a fast team in the field.

### CURATOR/ARCHIVIST'S REPORT

- Donna Bowen

Over the past few months we have acquired several donations.

(1) A collection of newspaper clippings that include birth, death, marriage announcements and other articles of interest. These were collected by Mary (Robertson Dagleish and donated by Alice Craig. ✓

(2) Framed photo - Threshing Day, circa 1911, taken at the Reaney farm north of Metcalfe village. The photo was taken by Maynard Reaney, donated by Cecil Reaney. ✓

(3) Photo of Vernon Orange Lodge, 12<sup>th</sup> of July Parade, L.O.Y. No. 67, Vernon ca 1920's, donated by Lorne Craig. ✓

(4) Triangular wooden framed poster advertising "The Great Russell County Fair, Metcalfe - Sept 26, 1927, 1900. Please let us know who donated this artifact. - Gerald Morris ✓

(5) After years of research, Leonard Lemoine has completed The Lemoine Story: A Family History of the Ottawa Valley Lemoines and donated a copy to add to our family history collection.



### MUSEUM NOTES

OPENING HOURS: closed for the winter. Call a member for an appointment for other times. Date for re-opening in spring not yet decided.

✓ Thanks to Maintenance - Bill Zandbelt, no severe damage was done to the museum during the ice storm/power outage. Bill drained the pipes, moved the plaque from the front (possible damage from thick ice sliding off the roof) and kept an eye on things. Most important was that he discovered the roof sagging under the ice and braced it up temporarily. Possible repairs in future? We'll have to wait and see.

✓ A reminder that 1998 memberships are now \$10.00 and thanks for your support in the past.

✓ Letters and submissions to the editor welcomed.

### NOTE:

By the time you receive this Newsletter, "Robbie Burns Day" from the land of the heather will have come and gone and likewise "St. Patrick's Day" of the Emerald Isle. I leave you with these few words.

### IRISH BLESSING

May the road rise to meet you

May the wind be always at your back

May the sun shine warm upon your face.

May the rains fall soft upon your fields, and until we meet again.

May you be a long time in heaven, 'afore' the Devil knows you're dead.

Editor