

THE CABOOSE



NEWSLETTER OF THE CUMBERLAND TOWNSHIP HISTORICAL SOCIETY (CTHS)

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President's message (by Jean-François Beaulieu)

Next month will be the CTHS AGM. So please be present for this occasion on the selection of the executive board and a review of what your board accomplished during the last year. As my three-year term as President ends with this meeting, I would like to tell you how happy it made me to serve the Society. Please consider joining the executive so we can keep the Society a vibrant source of Cumberland Township history.

Our Society

The Cumberland Township Historical Society (CTHS) was founded in 1986. We are a non-profit, volunteer and community-based organization whose goal is to preserve Cumberland Township history.

Our newsletter

The Caboose is published six times each year by the Cumberland Township Historical Society.

Our Executive

- Jean-François Beaulieu, President
- Dorothy-Jane Smith, Past President, Caboose editor
- Vice-President – vacant
- Gilles Chartrand, Treasurer
- Verna Cotton, Director
- Ross Bradley, Director
- Brian Coburn, Director
- Karly Ali, CTHS website

Ex-officio

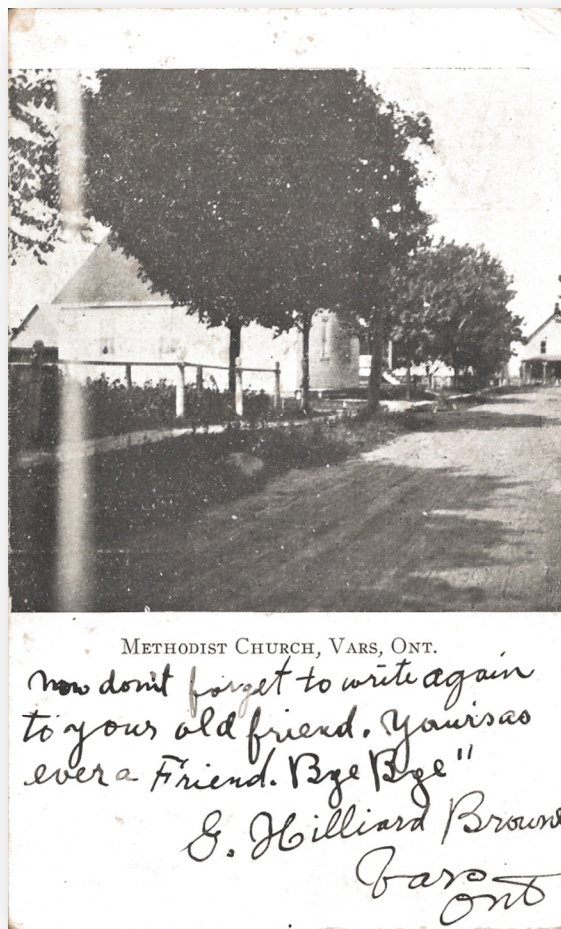
- Randall Ash, Caboose production

Our address and local history room

Cumberland Branch
Ottawa Public Library
Local History Room
1599 Tenth Line Road
Ottawa, ON K1E 3E8

Our World Wide Web address

www.cths.ca



What you can find with the search term "Vars" on ebay! This postcard, postmarked July 13 08, shows the Methodist Church in Vars partially hidden by a badly placed tree. It was sent by G. Hilliard Browne to Miss Sadie Holden of Sutton, Quebec. To date, I have not been able to find Hilliard Browne in Vars by searching Ancestry.

Next meeting of the CTHS

The Annual General Meeting of the CTHS will take place on Wednesday, May 7th, 2014 at the **Navan Curling Club**, 1305 Fairgreen Ave. Following the meeting, Jeannie Smith and Allan Findlay will provide songs for singing from across the decades. Plan to arrive at **6:30 pm** as the meeting will begin at **7:00 pm**. Be sure to bring a friend along. Light refreshments, as always, will be served.

Society calendar



For more information on these and other upcoming 2014/15 events, please contact a member of the executive committee or visit our website at www.cths.ca.

March 5 th	CTHS General Meeting
Sept. 3 rd	Gerry Boyer on Touring Scotland in search of Camerons and McMillans
Nov. 5 th	Gilles Chartrand with items from the World War collection in the Clarence-Rockland Museum
January 7 th	TBA
March 4 th	TBA
May 6 th	TBA

CTHS meetings - Unless other stated, all meetings are at 10th Line Road Police Station 2nd floor Boardroom. Doors open by 6:30 and start time is 7:00 pm.

At the Museum – 613-833-3059 / CumberlandMuseum@ottawa.ca

Contact the museum for costs and times
The Museum will reopen in May 2014.

The Caboose is made possible in part through a grant from the City of Ottawa.



Contact us

If you have questions or suggestions regarding any aspect of the Society, you may contact any member of the executive by phone or by email:

- Jean-François Beaulieu, President (841-0424) jeanfb@sympatico.ca
- Dorothy-Jane Smith, Past President (225-3554), Caboose editor
- Randall Ash, Caboose production (833-3207) randall2620@rogers.com
- Karly Ali, Website, cths@cyberus.ca

A Plea to Members

There is an important Annual General Meeting coming up in May. There was a danger that the Society might cease functioning as there were concerns that there would be no new members to replace key members of the executive who were going to retire this year. I became alarmed at this news and assured the current executive that I, for one, would consider taking on the president's position to ensure that the Society would keep running. It has an excellent website, sound financing and a group of interested readers and contributors. There is a catch, however. I currently live in Killaloe, Ontario, and will probably be moving to Thunderbay this summer. If there is no one else willing to lead this historical society, I don't mind doing it from a distance. And I will be flying down to continue the historical work on Cumberland Township, Orléans, Rockland and Clarence Creek, which means spending blocks of time in the area. If I lead, we'll have to be creative about timetabling meetings and presentations. And there will need to be an understanding membership and key individuals with which to keep the executive going. So it's important that we get a strong show of interest at this year's AGM in order to keep the organization moving forward and to ensure that a "from-a-distance" president is acceptable. There is also the possibility that someone else might take the job on, someone closer to home.

Gérard Boyer

Have you read?

By Dorothy-Jane Smith

A Country of Our Own: The Confederation Diary of Rosie Dunn by Karleen Bradford, 2013

The Private Capital: Ambition and Love in the Age of MacDonald and Laurier by Sandra Gwyn, 1992

Karleen Bradford has written a book for teenage girls as part of a series called Dear Canada. It is very much a book intended to teach history and yet it is engaging. Bradford uses the device of a diary written by a 13-year old Irish-Canadian girl, Rosie Dunn, to explore the smelly, muddy streets of Ottawa as they would have been seen by working teenagers in 1866. As well, by making Rosie a novice housemaid, the author can present the work of a young servant girl in a natural style by having Rosie write about successes and mishaps learning new tasks. And since Rosie works for a civil service family, she can record in her diary what she overhears of the debates around Confederation and her impressions of such personalities as Thomas Darcy McGee.

Rosie is an engaging character and Bradford's writing style is pleasant and easy to read. My main complaint is that everybody is so sweet and so nice. The cook is first shown to be a hard taskmaster but later defends Rosie when a valuable goes missing. Rosie's family is all sweetness and light as are her employers. Even the bossy friend, another teenage servant girl, makes one nasty comment about the Irish and must be confronted by Rosie, but is nevertheless a true friend. The one significant crisis in the story — the employer's loss of a valuable bracelet — is dissolved away quickly.

The book is definitely a teaching moment. As such, it does not give me the magical feeling I find in some children's books. But the teaching is woven in so as not to jar and it provides interesting photos of the primitive Ottawa of the 1860s.

Bradford tells us in her introduction that she once sat next to Sandra Gwyn on a plan trip to England and is greatly indebted to Gwyn's *The Private Capital*. Gwyn's book is the adult, non-teaching, version of Bradford's book. Gwyn uses a real life civil service family, Edmund and Fanny Meredith, to portray life in Ottawa in the

days when it was named capital of the United Provinces of Canada in 1866. The same primitive environment of muddy streets, unhealthy and stinking sanitary drains, and fever are portrayed but the focus is on the political cast of characters. The Merediths were a well-placed family which brings in political characters such as Sir Charles Tupper. Besides being a father of confederation, as Dr. Tupper he was Fanny Meredith's physician but, given the close friendship between the two as seen in letters, Gwyn has the opening to go behind the famous Fathers of Confederation Portrait and talk about his womanizing reputation. Through these lives and then through the writings of a woman journalist, using the *nom de plume* of Amaryllis, Gwen is able to provide a gossipy look at the political and personal relationships of Canada's early leaders.

Gwyn was a journalist, the Ottawa editor of *Saturday Night*, and her writing is fluid and yet literate. *The Private Capital* is also a very well-researched book. It may have been published more than 20 years ago but in my opinion it has not yet been bettered at turning the stuffy cardboard figures of Confederation into human beings.

Gwyn specifically is aiming at popular history but she does provide an afterward to talk about the resources she used in each section. For the most part she used diaries, letters, scrapbooks, contemporary photographs, newspaper reports as well as reputable secondary sources.

Both books are available at the Ottawa Public Library.



Solving a Puzzle to find the (right) Smyths

by Dorothy-Jane Smith

As the CTHS embarks on a new project about families, I have been thinking about the challenges in establishing who is (or rather was) family. About ten years ago I learned just how big a challenge this can be when I saw my immigrant Smith (Smyth) ancestors on a 1980s

pedigree chart prepared by a CTHS researcher but for a completely different Smith family.

My family from the Canaan Road and the Navan Smiths share a number of given names: Thomas, Jane, John, Rachel. When I saw Thomas Smith and Jane Ash born Ireland and buried in Dale Cemetery on that unsourced (and I was certain incorrect) chart, I told myself how much better a job I was doing. But I pulled up my Smith file, I saw I had little reason to congratulate myself. My only sources for connecting to the Thomas Smyth (ca. 1801-1873) and Jane Ash (ca. 1817-1895) buried in Dale Cemetery were the (unsourced) claims of my father and uncles. They had always pointed out the broken old tombstones as being our immigrant ancestors.



Robert Smyth and his wife Nelly Sell, likely about 1897 or 1898 with their first child to survive infancy, May. Robert was the son of William T. Smyth and Margaret Lough and grandson of Thomas Smyth and Jane Ash, immigrants from County Down, Ireland (from the collection of Mary T. Wilkie)

But how did they know this? The eldest of them, John (Alton Alfred) Smith had been born eight years after Jane (Ash) Smith had died. They had had no direct contact with the immigrant generation.

My father remembered his grandfather, William Smyth, as a visitor to his childhood home. Dad told me that William Smyth had been born in Ireland and was the son of Thomas Smyth and Jane Ash of County Down. I assume that during these visits William Smyth, as well as his son, Robert (Bob) Smyth, told the children about William's parents. Certainly, my uncle, John Smith, had stories to tell of a lazy Thomas Smyth and a long-suffering Jane who was the true mainstay of the family. He had to have heard these from those who had known the couple. But while I have total trust in my father and uncles, I perhaps need a little more to make a case to the world. Could I find one piece of paper to show that those two tombstones in Dale Cemetery connect us, the Canaan Rd Smiths, to Ireland?

I had all the sources I need to link to William Smyth (census, marriage records, birth records, etc.). What was missing was a record to show William as a child of Thomas and Jane.

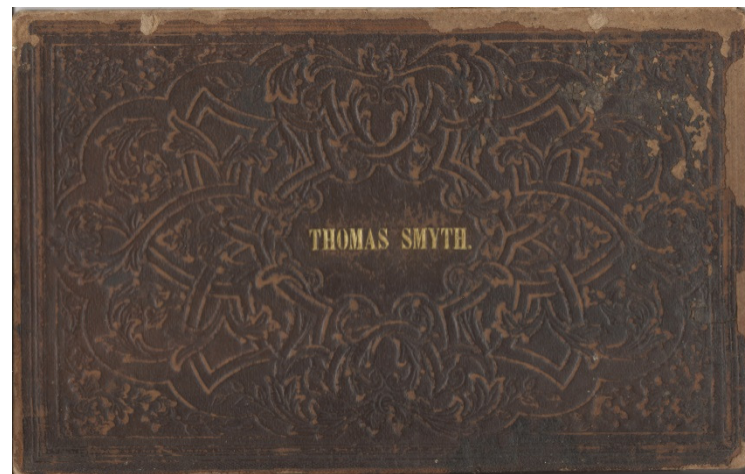
Census records did not help. In 1861 William Smyth was already married to Margaret Lough and they were living with her brother, Daniel Lough, on lot 37 in Concession 1 in Clarence Township (just east of Canaan Road). William's birth year falls decades before civil registration in Ontario and we have not found a baptismal record. We have the date of his marriage from a family bible held by Glen and Jeannie Smith but again no church or civil records to help us with a father's name.

We know William died sometime after November 1915. That is when he conveyed to his son Robert 50 acres in the Commons east of Lot 1 Concession 1 O.S. Cumberland Township (conveyance document in possession of Glen Smith). If his death had been recorded in Ontario, it should be available now through Ancestry for he likely died before 1936; certainly the family would have mentioned had he exceeded age 100. But no record has been found.

William could have died in Buckingham, Quebec. This was where his children, other than Robert, lived and where, according to Luva (Presley) Smith, wife of Norman Smith, he was buried. Some years ago Luva pointed out to her daughter-in-law, Jeannie Smith, the section in Buckingham's St. Andrew's cemetery where he was buried. Alas there are no stones in that section and no cemetery records from that period. Nor is there a record of his death and burial in the St. Andrew's United Church (Buckingham) records.



Another way to link William to Thomas Smyth is by showing him to be a sibling of a known child of Thomas and Jane. This path was the most fruitful. In the 1861 census Thomas and Jane were enumerated with three teen-age children: John (ca. 1841-1913), Elizabeth (ca. 1843-1912), and Rachel Smyth (ca. 1845-1920). The three children never married and can be found living with the parents and later their mother through to the 1891 census.



These two bible covers are embossed with the names of their owners, Thomas Smyth and William Smyth. They are the best hard evidence available for a link between the known ancestor of the Canaan Road Smiths, William, and the Thomas Smyth who is buried in Dale Cemetery (from the collection of Jeannie Smith).

Only Rachel Smyth's death certificate gave her parents' name but it is indeed Thomas Smyth and Jane Ash. The certificate also holds a tenuous connection to the Canaan Road Smiths. The informant for her death was "R.W. Smith of Rockland, brother". One brother, John, had died seven years earlier. So who was R.W. Smith? Possibly our elusive William T. Smith but perhaps his son, Robert William Smith of Canaan Road? Rachel died in Ottawa and the registrar may not have

known the difference between the west side of Canaan Road and the east.

More circumstantial evidence has come to

light. Uncle John Smith had told us that Thomas and Jane's youngest daughter, Sarah, had married an Italian named Alex Perino and moved to the U.S. He said his Aunt Rachel visited that sister many years later. My sister used Ancestry to discover a child born in Ottawa to a Sarah Smith married to Alexandro Perrino in the 1850s. Even better, she found a border crossing for a Rachel Smith from Ottawa to visit a Mrs. Sarah Perrino in Ohio.

When talking to Jeannie Smith recently, she added the best evidence to date: covers of two bibles kept in a trunk which came from the basement of Norman and Luva Smith's home. I believe they cinch the case that Thomas Smith who is buried in Dale

Cemetery, was the father of William T. Smith of Canaan Road.

I can now say with confidence, that this time is not misplaced, that the Canaan Road Smiths are descended from Thomas Smyth and Jane Ash who immigrated from County Down Ireland to Clarence Township and who are buried in Dale Cemetery, Cumberland Village.



Gerry Boyer on Gerry Boyer

My approach to genealogy and history

I really don't have an approach. Rather I have a deep passion for learning about my ancestors and the times that they lived.

I have a decent general history background and have developed very detailed knowledge about Montréal, Acadia, the Montmagny and Beauce areas of Québec, the Scottish Highlands and the Ottawa Valley on both sides between Montreal and Ottawa because that's where some of my ancestors lived. It helps to be bilingual. I've become an active member of the Société généalogique canadienne-française in Montréal and have received training in paleography, the re-writing of old French documents into a more legible French copy. I'm also an active member of the Cumberland Township Historical Society and did some work with the Société franco-ontarienne du patrimoine et de l'histoire d'Orléans (SFOPHO) last year.



Ma méthodologie en généalogie et en histoire

C'est moins une méthodologie qu'une passion pour tout savoir au sujet de mes ancêtres et des temps qu'ils ont vécu.

J'avais déjà une bonne formation générale en histoire et j'ai ensuite développé une connaissance plus approfondie de l'histoire plus détaillée des régions suivantes : Montréal, l'Acadie, Montmagny et la Beauce, les « Highlands » de l'Écosse et la vallée de l'Outaouais des deux côtés de la rivière entre

Montréal et Ottawa, inclus la région aujourd'hui nommée Mirabel. Ce sont les régions d'où proviennent mes ancêtres. C'est un atout d'être bilingue. Je suis membre actif de la société généalogique canadienne-française de Montréal et j'ai pris une formation de base en paléographie, la transcription de vieux documents français en un français plus lisible. Je suis aussi membre actif de la société historique du canton de Cumberland (CTHS) et

j'ai travaillé au sein de la société franco-ontarienne du patrimoine et de l'histoire d'Orléans (SFOPHO) l'année passée.

J'adore l'interaction sociale et la généalogie agit un peu comme un passeport lorsqu'on s'introduit à des étrangers alors qu'on fait

de la recherche généalogique et historique; en général, les gens sont très réceptifs. J'ai une formation en pédagogie, donc je tente de rendre mes présentations courtes et intéressantes. La technologie m'est très utile, surtout le « e-mail » et « Powerpoint ». Je fais partie de trois grands réseaux familiaux (les Boyer, les Morin et les McNeely) qui m'encouragent, qui en rajoutent et qui aiment entendre de mes découvertes.

Quelle belle vie pour une personne à ce qu'on appelle l'âge d'or!

