

# THE CABOOSE



NEWSLETTER OF THE CUMBERLAND TOWNSHIP HISTORICAL SOCIETY (CTHS)

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## Editor's ramblings (by Jeannie Smith)

Congratulations to the new **Heritage Public School** in Navan as it opens its doors to students who live in the old Cumberland Township area. Riverview PS in Cumberland and Meadowview PS in Navan have been closed. A two-roomed frame school replaced Navan's first school, a log structure built in 1861, in 1896. In 1915, the four-room, two-storey brick school was erected. This became a continuation school until 1952. An addition was constructed in 1960 to accommodate flush toilets, sinks and drinking fountains. The Cumberland Township Agricultural Society acquired the building in 1966 when Meadowview PS was built. The West-Carleton-Russell Historical Society stored artefacts in this building until 1977 when the school was demolished to make way for the Navan Curling Club. Living, laughing and learning will continue to be legacies for local students. Best wishes to the staff and students of Heritage PS for a positive school year!

### **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**

- Randall Ash, President and newsletter production
- Jeannie Smith, Secretary-Treasurer and Newsletter Editor
- Verna Cotton, Director
- Dan Brazeau, Director
- Jean-François Beaulieu, Director
- Dorothy-Jane Smith, Director
- Bob Kendall, Director

### **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](http://www.cths.ca)



### **Next meeting of the CTHS**

The next General Meeting will be held on Wednesday, September 6, 7:00 pm at the Ottawa Regional Police Station on St. Joseph Blvd & Tenth Line. Guest speaker will be Randy McConnell who will talk about the Dunning Family.

## Society calendar

For more information on these and other upcoming 2006 events, please contact a member of the executive committee or visit our website at [www.cths.ca](http://www.cths.ca).



Wednesday Sept. 6th	CTHS General Meeting, Police Boardroom, Tenth Line, Orleans: The Dunnings: Cumberland's Founding Family, Guest Speaker: Randy McConnell
Sept. 22 <sup>nd</sup> , 23 <sup>rd</sup> , 29 <sup>th</sup> , 30 <sup>th</sup>	Shades of the Evening: Vintage Stock Theatre; Cumberland Heritage Village Museum
Wednesday November 1 <sup>st</sup>	CTHS General Meeting Ottawa Regional Police Boardroom Tenth Line Road; Guest speaker: Laurie Watson "Recollections of the Lost Village of Canaan." 7 pm

## Contact us

If you have questions or suggestions regarding any aspect of the Society including The Caboose, our local history room or anything else of interest to you or to the Society, you may contact any member of the executive by phone or by email:

- Randall Ash, President (833-3207) [randall2620@rogers.com](mailto:randall2620@rogers.com)
- Jean-François Beaulieu, Director (841-0424) [jeanfb@sympatico.ca](mailto:jeanfb@sympatico.ca)
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- Dorothy-Jane Smith, Director (225-3554)
- Bob Kendall, (613-830-0015) [bobkendall@sympatico.ca](mailto:bobkendall@sympatico.ca)

## We've got mail!



### Letter from Joan (Dibden) Tweedie

Dr. Tweedie (1895-1966) started his practice of medicine in Rockland in 1920 after graduating from McGill University in Montreal. Many of his patients were from the rural areas around Clarence, Rockland and Cumberland. Dr. Tweedie was a doctor before the days of appointments. All you had to do was go and sit in the waiting room and everyone just knew who was next. Sometimes there would be a large number of patients waiting but you knew you would be seen before too long. The wait was never like it is today even when you have an appointment. I'm sure there were many meals he

missed as the patients kept appearing.

Dr. Tweedie was the coroner for this area and was on the scene of one of the worst train wrecks which occurred in Leonard where 8 people died and 50-70 were hurt. He served on Rockland's Utilities Commission for 33 years and was on the High School Board. Dr. Tweedie was Trustee and Secretary-Treasurer of St. Andrew's United Church in Rockland. All this, in addition to 46 years as a doctor, made for a very busy life. This culminated in his death in November 1966 and his burial in Dales Cemetery. He will always be remembered as a great doctor and a fine gentleman. People like the 'doc' come along only rarely!

### Letter from Joan (Barnett) Lancaster

Dr. Tweedie was also practising in the time before the government made sure doctors were paid for all their services. I know I came from a family of 10. He had delivered each one of us. He also delivered our 3 children. I'm sure there were many times throughout his years of practice that he was never paid for his calls and he never pressed people for payment. It also seemed like most babies were born in the middle of the night. I know when I was at Mrs. Kennedy's for the birth of one of our children, there was one night he sat by the bed waiting on this baby to be born. He never gave you the impression that he would like to get home and finish his night's sleep as the patients would be arriving in his waiting room before long. Can you see this happening today?

During the winter months, before the roads were paved or ploughed, he used an old Model T that he had modified to run in the narrow sleigh tracks of horse drawn sleighs, to reach the homes of some of his patients. I think this had to be the forerunner of the snowmobile! Many babies were delivered and tonsils were removed in farmhouses before hospitals were the norm. This was a time when doctors made house calls. I'm sure many of you do not remember house calls.

**CTHS 20th anniversary books will be available for sale soon!**

## Congratulations!!

Our own Verna Cotton has received a 2005 Certificate of Achievement from Ontario's Heritage Community Recognition Programme.



## THE CUMBERLAND TOWNSHIP AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY

*Excerpts from a history written by Verna Cotton  
with Sam Rathwell and Syd Cotton, 1986  
for the Navan Women's Institute's Tweedsmuir Book*

Our Society was started through The Farm Forum group in Navan, during the Second World War. Mr. George McCullough and Mr. James Cotton, our older members, remembered that Senator Edwards, Russell County Member, left an annuity to the six townships in his riding (the four Townships of Russell plus Osgoode and Gloucester Townships of Carleton County). There was \$2,700 in an account from the Senator W.C. Edwards Estate. A general meeting was held at Leonard, January 30, 1946 where a motion to form the Cumberland Township Agricultural Society was passed. It was registered in Toronto with the Ontario Societies of Agriculture. With the help of Mr. Norman Wilson, son-in-law of the late W.C. Edwards, the funds were received.

Within a short time, many people thought we should hold a fair at Navan. The Saturday before Labour Day was chosen as our date. All we had was the school building and grounds (2 acres) and the adjoining land owned by Mr. George Shaw who gave us free use of the land for a few days. He also stored many things in his sheds. We borrowed a large tent from the Experimental Farm in Ottawa and they sent a few men out to Navan to help set up the tent.

The first Cumberland Township Agricultural Society Fair Board was composed: Sam Rathwell - President;

Herve Joly- 1st Vice President; Morton Johnston- 2nd Vice President; Foster Nelson- Secretary; Syd Cotton & Clarke Rathwell- Auditors.

Executive Committee: Wesley Savage, Oscar Lafrance, Nelson Charlebois, Arthur Charbonneau, Fortunat Bertrand, George A. McCullough, Dwight Watson and Norman Edwards.

Mr. James Cotton was taking entries for roots and vegetables on Friday night, August 30, 1946 for our first fair when he suffered a heart attack and died in his chair. He was 82 years of age. The Cotton Family showed their Ayrshire cattle at the fair on Saturday. That took great courage and illustrated their loyalty to the fair and to their father.

The school and school grounds at Navan were adapted by willing workers to accommodate the exhibits and though the entries were restricted to Cumberland Township residents, the response was beyond expectation. Years later, the exhibits were open to Russell County and the world beyond.

We were fortunate with nice weather for many years and held all livestock and poultry classes outside. Entry fees the first year were: horses and cattle both individual and groups, 25c each; hogs, sheep and poultry 10c each; horticulture, homecraft and domestic science 5c each. The membership fee for 1947 was withheld from prize winnings in excess of \$1.00. Admissions to the first fair in 1946 were 35c for adults, 20c for children and 25c for cars. The Navan Women's Institute served box lunches from the basement of the school. These consisted of 4 slices of ham sandwiches, 1 piece of cake, 1 piece of pie, 1 doughnut, fruit and tea - all for the sum of 50c. At a separate booth they sold hot dogs and cold drinks.

The next year in June 1947, the W.I. had to ask for sugar rations - still the effect of the war. They

operated a booth (net proceeds were \$103.15). In 1948, the Cumberland W.I. operated a food booth. The Anglican Church at Navan also ran a booth. Originally the fair was held on the Saturday of Labour Day weekend, adding Friday in 1948. Ten years later, the fair dates were moved to mid-August, to occur the week before the Ottawa Exhibition. In 1972 the first Sunday fair was held. Since 1974, the Navan Fair has covered four days. The Cumberland Township Agricultural Society was upgraded from a Class "C" fair in 1946, to a Class "B" fair in 1962 which provided more grants to many classes and buildings. In 1981, it became a Class "A" fair.



**2006 Navan Fair: The winning float**



Eric Smith on the CTHS float at the 2006 Navan Fair

In the early 1950's, the fair gave land to the Township to build an arena and hall. The Township got grants from the Ontario government and an arena was built, which the fair uses each year. The first arena burned November 1, 1953 and was rebuilt in 1954. In 1961, a tribute was paid to the late Frank Ryan from CFRA. Mr. Ryan did his noon broadcast, "Farmer's Notebook" live from the Navan fair grounds. He was a great promoter of agriculture in the valley. In 1962 the first cattle barns were built. The CTAS, in conjunction with the Navan Lion's Club, purchased 10 more acres of land in 1965. In 1966 the CTAS purchased the abandoned school beside the arena and for a number of years it was used for fair exhibits.

In 1970, in recognition of the 25th anniversary of the fair, the Ontario Government presented each past president with a life membership to the Society. In 1971, Mrs. Ethel Findlay becomes the first lady president. The first parade was held in 1975 and it has been a yearly attraction ever since. In 1976/77, the new exhibit building was completed, with the assistance of the Navan Lion's Club and Wintario grants.

The Royal Canadian Mounted Police were at Navan Fair in 1981 and it had to be one of the coldest and muddiest days. In 1983, to honour the

founders of the Cumberland Township Agricultural Society, a commemorative plaque was hung in the Wintario Building. The second arena was condemned on January 19, 1982 and with voluntary help, it was demolished and material and lumber sold in May. A new arena was built and the first hockey game was played in the arena on Sunday, October 17, 1982. In 1984, on October 20, the Navan arena hall was filled with over 300 people who celebrated the mortgage burning party! The committee was given three years to raise \$500,000 and it was raised in two years. In 1985, the 40th fair was opened by Mrs. Kathleen Ryan under the dome-shaped canopies that had formed a roof over the LeBreton Flats altar for the visit of Pope John Paul. These domes were transported to the Navan Fair grounds in November 1984 by helicopter. Also that year a new cattle show barn was built.

Since the Cumberland Township Agricultural Society had proven so successful, it was decided at the 1985 annual dinner, to apply for a manager. Mrs. Barbara Cauley was selected as the first fair manager, which was the highlight of Sunday at the Fair.

Several new barns have been added since 1984 and in 1985; the first fair manager was hired. In 1991, the Navan Curling Club opened its doors adjacent to the Fairgrounds. In 1992 the Curling Club building was used for Fair exhibits. Somewhere along the line, the Fair got the reputation as "The Biggest Little Fair in the Ottawa Valley". Senator Edwards would no doubt be pleased.

## The Findlay Family

*contributed by Allan Findlay, written by Bessie Russell, edited by Elaine Findlay*

Upon searching the Register of Baptisms belonging to the Scottish (Episcopal) Church St. James, Cruden, Aberdeenshire, Scotland, 1834, the following facts were discovered. There were five baptisms recorded for children of **Alexander Findlay** and **Margaret Muir. Mary**, born Oct. 31, 1827, baptized Nov. 12, **Jane**, born Dec. 24, 1829, baptized Jan. 11, 1830, **Alexander** and **John** born Nov. 2, 1831, baptized Dec. 10 and **George**, born Feb. 1, 1834, baptized Feb. 23.

Life was very difficult in Scotland in the early part of the nineteenth century so Alexander and Margaret Findlay decided to seek a better life in Canada. They emigrated in 1834 with their daughters and son George. The twins were brought out by an uncle, **George Muir**, in 1842.

When they arrived in Canada, they settled in Lochaber, Lower Canada, and **William** was born Sept. 28, 1836 and baptized in Grenville, Lower

Canada. By the time the twins arrived with their uncle, the family had settled in Cumberland Township. As there were no roads, newcomers tried to settle near the river. A bit of land was cleared and buildings were erected. This property was rented and later bought from **Capt. Archibald Petrie**. His large stone dwelling was on the Ottawa River, 3 miles west of Cumberland Village. Many settlers, who were indebted to this 'Laird', were so isolated that it was months before the **Findlays** discovered that the **Garvocks**, who had emigrated about the same time, from the same place in Scotland, were living close by!

In the fall of 1846, **Alexander**, his son **George**, and one of the twins were returning by canoe, with their winter supplies, from Bytown. It is understood that another purpose of this trip was to lobby for a road to Bytown. Unfortunately, **Alexander** and **George** were drowned when the canoe capsized in the bay near their home, just off the Taylor Farm. **Mrs. Findlay** found herself in debt and depended on her daughters and teen-aged sons for survival. Mary and **Jane** went into domestic service until they married. With the financial help received from her brothers in Scotland, and the assistance of her family in Cumberland, the land was paid for and a farm was established. **Mary** married **William Russell** about 1854. **Jane** married **Robert Russell** in 1873. **John** married **Mary Erskine** about 1856. **Alexander** married Catherine **Burns** in 1865. They lived for a time on a farm opposite **Fitzpatrick's**, then moved to B.C. **Alexander** died in Vancouver in 1912. **William**, a bachelor, was killed by a bull in 1907 on the farm of **Robert Russell** where he was living.

**John** purchased 100 acres (west half Lot C Con. 8 **Brian Findlay**, son of **Percy** is present owner). This land was purchased from the Crown Nov. 6, 1857. The cost of this land was 20 pounds. **John** erected a log house south of the present home (Watters Road east



The Findlays (back row) John and Jane Findlay;  
(middle row) Ida, Percy, Fred and Russell;  
(front row) May and Ken

of Trim) and they raised a family of two sons and two daughters. (There is evidence that twin daughters were also born to them in 1872, but died of scarlet fever in 1873.)

Daughter, **Mary** (b. 1866) and her husband, **Robert Millar**, raised seven daughters and two sons. They moved out west in the early 1900's. One of these daughters, **Violet**, was married to **Walter Beckett**. They had no children. **Jessie** married **Sydney Dunning** and they had two sons and two daughters. **Edna**, a spinster, worked in Buckingham, Quebec, for the Electric Reduction Company. Her nephew, **Robert**, lived in Buckingham. **Mary's** older son, **Walter**, farmed in Northern Ontario.

**Margaret Findlay**, **John's** older daughter (b. 1857), never married. She died in Cumberland in 1925. Son **James** (b. 1864) married **Mary McWilliams** and farmed near Navan. They had nine daughters and one son. After raising such a large family with the 24-hour care children seemed to require, she once complained she hadn't had a good night's sleep in 20 years! Son **William** (b. 1860) died in 1887. **John**, the remaining son (b. 1869), stayed at home. When he married **Jane McAskill** in 1896, he built a clapboard house on the property. His wife lived with her parents (on the **Cox** Farm, Frank Kenny Rd.) until the house was built. Their family consisted of:

**Ida**, born 1896, married **John McNamara**, Masson, Que., died Aug. 11, 1970.

**Kenneth**, born 1898, married **Annie Casey**, Cumberland, died Oct. 15, 1980.

**Lena**, born 1900, never married, died July 5, 1982.

**Gordon**, born 1902, married **May McNamara**, Masson, Que., died Sept. 22, 1989.

**Russell**, born 1903, married **Reta Deavy**, Cumberland, died April 18, 1980.

**Mae**, born 1906, married **Urban Hamilton** (died Feb. 6, 1989) Buckingham, Que., died Sept. 4, 2001.

**Fred**, (Wilfred) born 1909, married **Margaret (Quinn) Scharf** (died Sept. 17, 1987), Metcalfe, died Jan. 25, 1985.

**Maud**, born 1911 died 1920.

**Esther**, born 1913 died 1914.

**Florence**, born 1915, married **Urban Lancaster** Navan, died Mar. 24, 1958.

**Percy**, born 1916, married **Madeline Eastman** (died Mar. 29, 1999), North Gower, died Mar. 14, 2003.

**Campbell**, born 1919, married **Thelma Bates** Ottawa died Apr. 18, 1989.

**John Findlay Sr.** and his wife **Mary Erskine** lived in the houses they had built on the south part of the property. She was an invalid in a wheel chair. Every evening grandson **Kenneth** (father of **Allan**) would run over with the mail. One evening he came back to say he couldn't open the door. Family members went over and found Grandpa Findlay lying dead against the door. Grandma Findlay went to live with



The Findlays (from left to right): (back row) Gordon, Russell, May, Fred, Percy, Florence, Campbell, (front row) Lena, Ken, Jane and Ida.

**James Findlay's** family in Navan until her death the following spring.

The old log house was moved over to son **John's** where a frame barn had been erected in 1903. The log barn had already been moved in 1905 and served as a horse stable. This building is still standing and used for storage of straw and oats. The log house was used for many years as a hen house and pigpen until it was torn down and an aluminum machine shed was erected in 1968. A stable was added to the barn in 1928, a very rainy year that meant milking cows outside was most uncomfortable. John designed a type of door handle for the barn, and had it patented.

Cream from this dairy farm was sent to **A. Casselman's** butter factory in Orleans after **Martin's** cheese factory west of the school (S.S. # 10, Frank Kenny & Innes) closed. After **John Findlay** died in 1943, **Percy** sent milk to an Ottawa dairy. **Jane Findlay**, **Percy's** mother, passed away in 1967, aged 92. She had remained active and alert until her death and took quite an interest in her 35 grandchildren and over 20 great-grandchildren.

Electricity came to this farm in 1951. The milking machine, bought in 1945, was converted to electricity and an electric cooling system installed in a tank of water was used. In 1959, new rules and regulations were enforced, so the milk cooling system was changed to bulk tank and stainless steel sinks with a hot water tank. A water pressure system had to be installed, so now a bathroom could be built inside. What a blessing that was for **Madeline** and **Percy** and their children! Housework was lightened. The gasoline-powered washing machine was converted to electricity. Electric irons replaced the

heavy 'stove' irons and a refrigerator replaced the icebox. Gone were the cold winter days when ice had to be hauled from the Ottawa River with a team of horses and sleigh and stored in sawdust. An electric radio could now be used without fear of batteries running down. In 1954, the family bought their first television set. In 1965, a stable cleaner reduced the workload for this one-man operation. Silos were built, a 12-cornered wooden one in 1942 and then a larger cement slab in 1975. The well was dug with a post augur and, in 1983, it was deepened with a drill. The water is very hard but seems to come from some underground stream that never runs dry. This farm had gradually become completely tile-drained, and yielded good crops of hay, oats and corn. Taxes were \$123.21 in 1944 and \$2,277.11 in 1984. **Percy Findlay's** grandson, **Bradley Findlay**, is currently living on the Findlay family farm.

## The Hodge Family (Part 4)

by *Isobel Hodges*  
(Detailed Family History in CTHS room)

IV - **JOHN HODGES** (June 8, 1883 - May 14, 1973) did shanty work from the time he was fifteen. He also helped **WILLIAM** and **CHARLES** on **ISAIAH'S** farm. He rented the **NEWHAM** farm (S1/2, Lot D, Con. 7), Cumberland Township, before he married on June 29, 1917 to **EMILY DREDGE** (1897-1929). Children: 1. **Herbert Francis Hodges** (Apr. 17, 1918-Mar. 27, 1982); 2. **Mary Gwendolyn 'Gwen' Hodges** (Aug. 26, 1920); 3. **John 'Stanley' Hodges** (Sept. 15, 1923-June 29, 1967); 4. **Helen Jean Hodges** (Jan. 1, 1929), 5. **Beryl Hodges** (Jan. 1, 1929-Jan. 22, 1929).

1. **Herbert** never married. He bought the **William Minogue** farm Lot D, Con. 6, owned by **Keith MacEachern** at the time, this farm was across the road from his father's farm. In 1973 **Herb** acquired his Dad's farm, (S1/2, Lot D, Con. 7) (The **Newham** farm). **Herb** is buried at Dales Cemetery.
2. **Gwen Hodges** married on Nov. 18, 1939 to **Bernard 'Bud' Arthur Trickett** (Dec. 29, 1920-Oct. 16, 1977). Children: i. **Donald Bernard** (Apr. 11, 1941-Oct. 7, 1946); ii. **Robert 'Bob' George** (Jan. 27, 1946-Nov. 11, 1986); **Ronald 'Keith'**; iv. **Stephen Robert Hubert**.
- iii. **Keith** married on Oct. 18, 1969 to **Susan 'Lynne' Innes** in Ottawa. Children: **Tracy Ann & Samantha Lynne**  
**Tracy** married on Sept. 5, 1998 to **John Csikany** in Merrickville. Their daughter is **Erica Dale Csikany**. After **Bud Trickett** left the army in 1945, he was lockmaster at Black Rapids, on the Rideau Canal. **Gwen** lives in Nepean.
3. **John 'Stanley' Hodges** was raised by and worked



Agnes (Rivers), John and Emily Hodges

for **WILLIAM HODGES** after his mother died in 1929. In 1952 **WILLIAM** gave **Stan**, out of love and affection, the NE1/4, Lot 3, Con. 7 and the SE1/4, Lot 2, Con. 7, Cumberland Township. **Stan** married on Oct. 6, 1951 to **Gertrude Elizabeth Dalrymple** (June 3, 1929). Children: i. **John 'Jack' Stewart**; ii. **Allen Brent**; iii. **Brian Calvin**; iv. **Heather Anne**.

i. **Jack** married on July 22, 1970 to **Christine Marks**. Divorced 1984. Children: **Brenda Leah**; Kristina **Elizabeth**;

c) **Julie Ann**. **Jack** remarried in 1985 to **Eleanor Marjorie Ferguson**, nee **Ormston**. They live on a lot on the homestead.

a) **Brenda** married on May 20, 1989 to **John Charles Presley**. Children: i. **Jesse John Ewen**; ii. **Jenna Elizabeth Jean**.

b) **Kristina** married on Sept. 20, 1997 to **Pierre Joseph Demers**. Children: **Alexander David Ansell**, son of **Dale Ansell**; **Nicholas Marcel Demers**; **Elizabeth Louise Demers**.

ii. **Allen** married on May 27, 1978 to **Pearl Ann Marsh Duncan**. Children: **Tammy Elizabeth**; **Stanley Allen Robert** This family lives in Warman, Saskatchewan.

iii. **Brian** married on June 26, 1982 to **Marsha Marie Koshman**. Children: **Andrew Stanley**, **Cody James Clinton David**, **Katie Marie**. Brian and Marsha are farming on the homestead.

iv. **Heather** married on Sept. 5, 1981 to **Randolph Foster**. Divorced 2001. Children: **Angela Elizabeth Irene**, **Joshua Leonard Stanley**. **Heather** remarried on Apr. 20, 2002 to **William Cameron McLaren** (Dec. 18, 1954 - Nov. 13, 2004). This family lives in Arnprior, Ont.

3. **Stan** and **Gertie** were dairy farmers. **Stan** was killed

in a tragic accident, when the bridge he was crossing, on a tractor, collapsed and the tractor flipped over. **Heather** was with him on the tractor but escaped unharmed. **Gertie** continued farming and worked as a waitress. Retired now, but still busy in many organizations. **Stanley** is buried at Dales Cemetery, Cumberland.

4. **Helen Hodges** went to live with **Annie** and **Oliver Scharf** when she was two and a half years old. **Annie** died when **Helen** was nine years old. She then came to stay with **HATTIE** and **WILLIAM HODGES**. **Helen** married on Oct. 11, 1952 to **Herbert Deavy** (Feb. 8, 1924 - Mar. 3, 2000). Children: **John 'Leslie' George** and **Leonard Carl**.

**Leslie** married on Aug. 27, 1977, in Cumberland to **Jacqueline Louise Dionne**. Children: **Shawn Jeffrey** and **Colin Patrick**.

**Les** is very musical. He plays guitar, violin, banjo and organ. **Leonard** married on Aug. 7, 1982 to **Catherine Mary Densley**. Children: **Christina Diane** and **Shannon Crystal**. **Les** and **Len** are in 'The Country Kings' Band.

**Herb Deavy** served overseas and married **Helen** when he returned. He then worked for Ontario Hydro in Western Ontario. In May 1959 they returned to Cumberland, Ontario where he worked for **Angus Wilson**, a farmer, then he worked for the Dept. of Highways until he retired.

5. **Beryl Hodges** (**Helen's** twin sister). Their mother died shortly after their birth. **Beryl** died twenty-one days later.

IV. **JOHN** remarried on Jan. 10, 1930 to **ROSE BROWNLEE**



John and Emily (Dredge) Hodges

(1892-Apr. 26, 1973). He continued to farm and in later years, **Herb** worked the farm. Due to bad health **JOHN** was in a nursing home in Ottawa. While there, **ROSE** died in a tragic fire on Apr. 25, 1973, when their home was burned. **JOHN** never regained his health and died May 14, 1973. They are both buried at Dales Cemetery, Cumberland, Ontario.



## Dennis the Menace named after district man

Story by Fred Inglis (Evening Citizen 1953) contributed by Verna Kinsella

Dennis the Menace was named after a resident of Vars. The story was told by Jim Mitchell, oldest member of the police village council. After retiring, Mr and Mrs Mitchell spent the winter with their married daughter at Monterey, California where they celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary. The Mitchells became acquainted with cartoonist Hank Ketchum, creator of Dennis the Menace. Jim Mitchell showed Fred Inglis an original sketch drawn by Ketchum that showed 'the little monster' Dennis, waving his hand and saying "Hi ya, Grampa Mitchell." Jim Mitchell said, "Hank Ketchum was just getting started when we were there and he had to have a family name for Dennis and his parents. So he took our name, Mitchell."

Vars is a police village in Cumberland Township, Russell County. Its three trustees are all well known men, Warren Hayes local merchant is chairman or 'Mayor'. Oldest member of council is Jim Mitchell, retired dairy and cheese factory inspector. Third member is Dave Stewart, who runs the sawmill and woodworking shop. Secretary-Treasurer since Nov. 17, 1922 is Ford Hitsman who was engineer at the mill until he retired recently.

During the last war, Vars had a platoon of the Cameron Highlanders of Ottawa, formed of men of Vars and district. They trained regularly under Lt. Tom Johnston of Ottawa and learned to shoot at the ranges. Among these civilian-soldiers was Sgt. Warren Hayes who took such a fancy to shooting that he's been going to the DCRA meets at Connaught Ranges every year since then. And he's been winning prize money too. Storekeeper Hayes has a collection of more than half a dozen highly polished rifles, including one which he rebuilt himself. Like any dyed-in-the-wool marksman, Mr. Hayes will talk shooting at the click of a rifle bolt.

Oldest member of council is Jim Mitchell whose hearty booming voice can be heard a block away. He would have made a great auctioneer. How old?

Well, he was 74 when he retired over three years ago. (1949). "I'm two days older than Churchill," said he. "You can figure it out from that." Hale and active, he doesn't look his age. As a dairy and cheese inspector, he drove a horse for weeks at a time. He bought his first car in 1920 and had eight cars by the time he bought his last in 1948. "We had terrible bad roads then," he said grimly, "and they're not much better now. We got the Hydro put in here in 1931. I went to Toronto to see about it in 1926 but it was five years before we finally got it. Harmony Hall was built in 1910, two years before I came here. It was privately owned. The village bought the hall in 1931 for a \$1,200 note that was against it. The hall paid for itself in five years. We hold all our meetings in the hall. It's the town's only asset but it's a money maker. Out of its earnings we had the hall painted and put on a new roof and we paid \$1,200 on the \$1,500 worth of fire equipment. We got a new portable pump and some hose."

Fred Inglis wrote, "After I had snapped a picture of the trustees, I found I had a flat tire. I got the trunk open and the hub cap off, but that was all. Mr. Hitsman grabbed the jack, Mr. Mitchell got out the spare and 'mayor' Hayes changed the tire while I stood and observed. This was the first time that I ever had a town council change a flat tire for me."



Warren Hayes, Jim Mitchell, Ford Hitsman



## Valley Towns

By Fred Inglis

### Church Union Came to Community

Vars had a united church long before church union came into effect in 1925. The first churches in his district were a Methodist and later a Presbyterian church, both were on the 'forced road' on the way to Bearbrook, according to Mrs. Frank H. Tanner,



widow of a former well-known merchant here. "The Methodists built in the village and then the Presbyterians built a church here." said Mrs. Tanner. "They could not keep up the two churches so they formed a united church. They used the Presbyterian church for services and the Methodist church became a church hall."

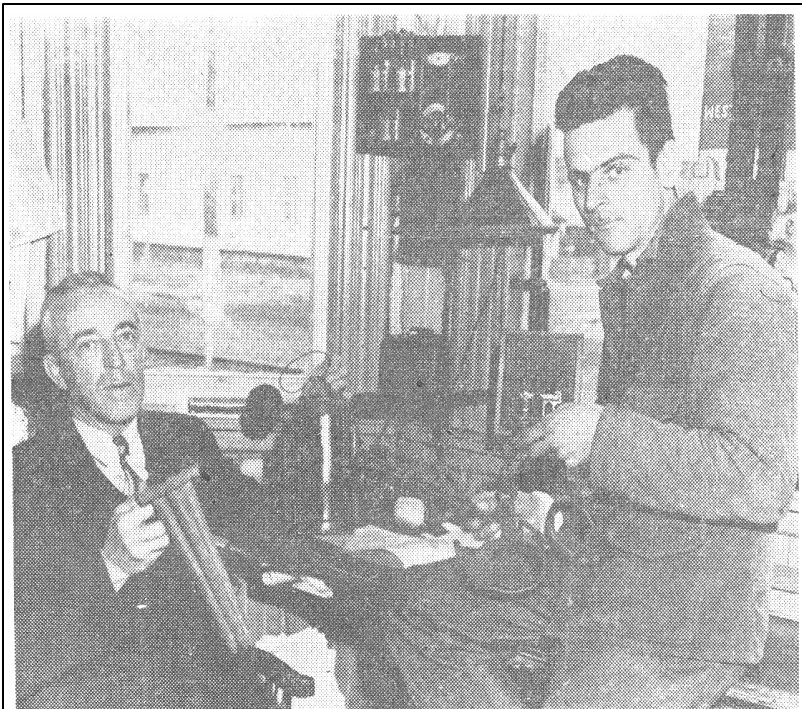
I learned from another source that church union came to Vars in 1917. It was Jim Mitchell who told me that Rev. Mr. Cormack was the Presbyterian minister and Rev. Mr. Backus, the Methodist. "We let them both go and we got a new minister, Rev. Mr. Strange. I forget what denomination he was. Rev. Mr. Rowe is the present minister.

Mrs. Tanner, whose husband died six years ago, is nearly 82. She and Mr. Tanner lived on a farm near here for six years after they were married. Then Mr. Tanner bought a store in Vars in 1904. Mrs. Tanner did the bookkeeping until she suffered a breakdown in health. Mr. Tanner sold the store but it wasn't long before he bought the George Gauley store and the big brick Gauley home where Mrs. Tanner now lives. "Gerry" Gauley, well-known Ottawa service station owner and trucking contractor, is a son of George Gauley. After Mr. Tanner's death, their son Harold continued to operate the business, until the fire. It was between 5 and 6 o'clock on Friday evening April 13 when flames broke out in the just-closed store. Up in smoke went the store and the big feed shed and their contents. The townspeople rushed into the blazing store and carried out what they could reach, the safe and some goods, which were stored in a house across the street. Harold Tanner continued to run a store here for a short while, then sold out to Mr. Wilmott. "There was a splendid cheese factory here some years ago," said Mr. Tanner, "but it was closed and later it burned down. Lindsay Fetterly had the sawmill and grist mill for many years. A.J. Stewart bought it. His son Dave now runs it. "Many people will remember Joseph Fraser who kept store on John Street, the street where the bank is. Mr. Quesnel has the store now. There was a terrible accident at the crossing here on Good Friday, the year after the fire. The Charbonneau family, six in the car, were on their way to church. One died as a result of the accident. The town is much the same as it was 50 years ago. Three or four new homes have been built around the edge of town. A lot of the young people have moved away.

Mrs. Tanner suffered arthritis in the neck and arms until someone told her about a simple remedy. That someone was a

homeless orphan the Tanners befriended and raised shortly after they were married. When this now grown-up man and retired soldier learned she was bothered with arthritis he suggested she apply 'low test gasoline' to the affected parts. It was hard to find but it worked like magic and the trouble has never returned. The trick is to find a real low test gasoline.

Citizen readers are kept informed of what goes on in Vars through our correspondent Mrs. Ford Hitsman. She has the biggest scrap book I've ever seen. It's an old wall-paper sample book filled with poems and news items that go way back. In it I saw a page from the Central Canada Citizen of Feb. 1, 1910 published Tuesday and Friday each week. There was a story and a group picture of more than 20 young ladies who won a three-week trip to Bermuda as guests of The Citizen. Mrs. Hitsman's sister, Miss Fannie Lemond, was one of the 20-odd Ottawa Valley girls who had won a popularity contest. Mrs. Hitsman is convener of the Red Cross Home Nursing class of 22 local and district girls who will graduate in December. Vars grew up around the railroad station when the Canada Atlantic Railway was built in 1883 but was first known as Bearbrook Crossing. Later the Grand Trunk took over the railway which is now the Canadian National.



Agent Alex MacKenzie, left, holds relics of earlier days, a candle mould for making tallow candles and a candle lantern. Dave Stewart, right, mill owner and village trustee, displays ancient policeman's billie and pair of old handcuffs or probably leg irons which usually hang on the office wall

## Home Children

By Deserae Komar



A lone child sits in an empty train station awaiting his uncertain future. His story is a poignant one. It is a story of how Canada was built; it is a story of our ancestry, an ancestry that is all too often forgotten. The Orphans of Industry; Canada Home Children, an exhibit now open at the

Heritage Village Museum, tells the story of Canada's youngest nation builders.

The children are part of the Home Children Saga, which spanned 61 years from 1869 to 1930. To help relieve the overcrowding in the streets of the United Kingdom, several thousand children were shipped to the vast wilderness of Canada. Separated from all things familiar to them, they worked as labourers or domestic help in Canadian homesteads. These children were quickly labelled "home children". This label would follow them through out their lives, causing them shame and embarrassment.

For some of the children Canada offered endless possibilities with a chance to start over, however an abundance of the children suffered extreme neglect and abuse. Despite the hardships, most of the children did survive, and went on to serve for Canada in the great wars. Today, almost 12% of our Country's population can trace their ancestry to a home child.

The Home Children exhibit contains artefacts that give insight to the lives of these children. Included in the exhibit are personal possessions, travel books, and a travel trunk and photos.

To help prepare the children for their life in the Dominion of Canada (as Canada was then known), children received a trunk pre-packed with the essential needs. On display in the exhibit is a trunk from Orphans Home Ottawa, on loan from the Bytown Museum. It would have contained: seasonal clothing, Sunday best suits, and personal toiletries. For reading material the trunks contained the Bible and a Traveller's Guide.

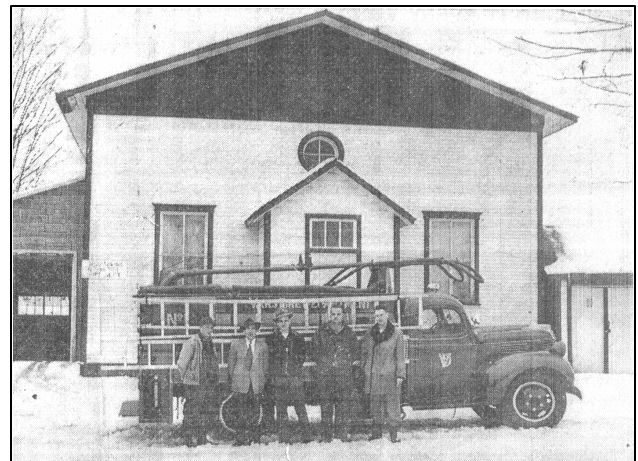
The children did bring over their meager belongings. These sentimental items would have been worth more than gold to the children.

A small two-inch ceramic doll with a simple cotton dress could have easily been stored in a pocket of a child while doing their chores but pulled out to chat with or to play with during breaks, her hand painted face forever displaying a smile.

Samples of letters from sibling and family were permitted only if the adoptive family allowed the communications. For some of the children placed in Northern Quebec these letters were often the only English they came into contact with.

School tours and programming is available for grades 1 to 6. Students will get a understanding of what life would have been like as a homechild through an assortment of activities and games.

For more information regarding booking please contact Cumberland Heritage Village Museum @ 613-833-3059 ext 222. Or go online at [http://www.ottawa.ca/residents/heritage/museums/cumberland/index\\_en.html](http://www.ottawa.ca/residents/heritage/museums/cumberland/index_en.html) for a list of the programming activities.



Vars gets first fire truck. The new fire hall (left) at Vars built to house the village's first fire truck was officially opened and the fire rig unveiled at a ceremony last night. Here Vars Fire Chief Dave Stewart (centre) and four of his 23 volunteer firemen are seen by the new equipment. Left to right are Dalton Lowe, Len Wilcott, Chief Dave Stewart, Walter Stewart and Don Tanner. Behind the truck is Harmony Hall, built in 1910. Appearing in front of the truck is a small building shed which housed the old fire equipment, two wheels and a cylinder. The fire truck was kept in the shed on the left side of Harmony Hall.