

The Caboose

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NEXT MEETING

Our next meeting will be held on Wednesday, January 6, 1999, at the Cumberland Public Library, 1515 Tenth Line Road, from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. This will be a working meeting aimed at filing papers into page protectors and binders. All are welcome!

LAST MEETING

On November 4th, more than 25 people came out to the Cumberland Public Library on Tenth Line Road to hear our guest speaker for the evening, Dr. I.F. Kennedy, who was accompanied by his wife and daughter, and by Angus Wilson. Ruth Parsons welcomed everyone and summarized recent activities. Verna Cotton introduced Dr. Kennedy, who used his own map of Europe, mounted on a stand, to give us a captivating account of the Second World War, providing a broad overview of the major campaigns of an "unnecessary" war brought about by Hitler's racist vision of his nation's destiny. Ruth thanked Dr. Kennedy, who then answered some questions, and those in attendance had a chance to mingle while enjoying some snacks and beverages. It was a very enjoyable meeting.

FEATURE ARTICLE

The Canada Company and Settlers in the Lower Ottawa Valley

by Bob Serré

Napoleon Bonaparte was finally defeated in the Belgian village of Waterloo on June 18, 1815. In the years that followed, thousands of homeless and displaced and impoverished people sought a new life in the Americas. There were many efforts to organize this mass emigration; one of them was the Canada Company.

In England, John Galt promoted the idea of setting up a colonization company in Upper Canada. A group of British merchants and the Colonial Office got together and founded the Canada Land Company, which was chartered in August 1826. In that same year, some two and a half million acres of land were purchased by the Company from the government, about half of the land being located in the Huron Tract in the western part of Upper Canada and the other half in the rest of the province.

A first task of the Company was to advertise the promising potential offered by Canada. This it did by distributing pamphlets throughout Great Britain, as well as in continental Europe. Settlement activities began in earnest after 1826. There were inevitable difficulties and inefficiencies, and progress was difficult and painfully slow at times, but the Canada Company did help a considerable number of immigrants settle in large undeveloped areas of Upper Canada.

The Canada Company focused its efforts in the western part of the province (Huron Tract, Guelph Block), but it was also active in the Lower Ottawa Valley. Some 18 lots were sold in Gloucester Township between 1827 and 1840. The Canada Company held land in all the concessions of Cumberland Township, as can be seen from the numerous entries in *Cumberland Pioneers* published by Roy McGilvray in 1994. Thomas Mercer Jones, Commissioner of the Canada Company, wrote a report in 1838, covering the years 1827 to 1836; it contains lists of Canada Company settlers, and among these are the names of six Cumberland pioneers: January 2, 1834, **Timothy Duggan**, 100 acres, west half of lot 16, concession 2; July 17, 1834, **William Hunter**, 100 acres, east half of lot 1, Front; October 1, 1834, **Donald McDonald**, 200 acres, lot 9, concession 10; July 8, 1835, **John Wallis** and **George Willey**, 130 acres each, east half and west half respectively of lot 3, Front; August 17, 1836, **James Campbell**, 200 acres, lot 9, concession 6.

Surprisingly enough, the Canada Company survived into the second half of the twentieth century. It stopped operating in Canada in 1951, and held its last meeting in England on December 18th, 1953. In its heyday, it helped make Canada much better known throughout Europe, and contributed to the settlement of Upper Canada in the latter's formative years.

[Those who wish to know more may read Clarence Karr's book entitled *The Canada Land Company*, published in Toronto in 1974, and Thelma Coleman's book, *The Canada Company*, published in Stratford, Ontario, in 1978.]

FEATURE OBITUARY

Readers are invited to send in obituaries that reflect the life and times of Cumberland Township pioneers. Researchers can be fussy about where their information comes from, so please indicate the source of the obituary. The following obituary was found in the microfilm version of *The Ottawa Journal* of Friday, February 11, 1921 (available at the Ottawa Public Library).

[page 18]

DR. JAMES FERGUSON DIES AT CUMBERLAND, AGED 83

Dr. James Ferguson, aged 83 years, of Cumberland, Ont., one of the oldest physicians of the Ottawa Valley, died yesterday at the home of his daughter, Mrs. L.A. Kennedy, Cumberland, Ont. He was born at Caledonia Springs, receiving his early

education there, later attending McGill University, graduating in 1861, with the degree M.A. In 1865 he finished a post graduate course at New York in medicine and surgery, attaining high honors. In 1863, Dr. Ferguson married Miss Susan R. McLaurin, of Riceville, Ont., who predeceased him some time ago. Surviving him are two sons, A.P.C. Ferguson, Rockland, Ont., and J.D. Ferguson, Cumberland; one daughter, Mrs. Lorne A. Kennedy; one brother, John C. Ferguson, Niles City, Mich., U.S.A., and one sister, Lady Cameron, wife of Sir Douglas Cameron, of Vancouver, and formerly Lieutenant-Governor of Manitoba.

Dr. Ferguson was widely known and dearly beloved. He had practiced his profession in the Cumberland district for about 60 years. For a number of years he had been coroner of Russell county. He was a monk of the Plymouth Brethren, having been converted at a revival in 1868. He took an active interest in all religious work.

Interment will be made at Cumberland.

DID YOU KNOW?

Cumberland was created as a township in Russell County in 1799. It was named after Prince Ernest Augustus (1771-1851), who became the Duke of Cumberland that year. [Source: Alan RAYBURN. Place Names of Ontario, 1997, p. 86]

EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

Serge Barbe of the City of Ottawa Archives has told me that their new premises in the Sussex Pavillion of Ottawa City Hall will be open to the public as of January 4, 1999.

Last October 24th and 25th, our Society held a workshop on genealogy for beginners at the Cumberland Heritage Village Museum. The workshop dealt with genealogy, family trees and family history, research opportunities in the Ottawa-Hull area, note-taking, the importance of indicating one's sources, and the formatting of data. It also included a computer demonstration. The workshop was held in French on Saturday, and repeated in English on Sunday. It was a success, and may well be repeated in the coming year.

May we enjoy happiness and health in the New Year, and may our historical and genealogical pursuits be a source of personal fulfilment and shared satisfaction.

BY THE WAY...

Merry Christmas and Season's Greetings. Many thanks to Dr. I.F. Kennedy for a very special and meaningful meeting in November; we had the highest attendance of any recent meeting for his presentation of the chronology of World War II. Thanks to all those who continue to be the lifeblood of the Historical Society, and remember, there is always room for at least one more member.

I had the opportunity to visit our new "local history room" at the Public Library, and while some final details (and lots of work on our part) still remain in limbo, we hope to be able to start moving in by about mid-January. We should have plenty of space for the collection, as well as work space.

Please plan to come out to the "working meeting" in January. Once more, thank you and have a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Ruth Parsons, President

QUOI DE NEUF?

La Régionale Ottawa-Carleton de la Société franco-ontarienne d'histoire et de généalogie doit déménager en décembre 1998 du 174 de la rue Stanley à l'Hôtel de ville d'Ottawa, promenade Sussex. Les nouveaux locaux seront accessibles au public à compter de la semaine du 4 janvier 1999.

VISAGES DU PASSÉ

Théophile Dessaint est arrivé à Cumberland avant 1864 pour y exercer le métier de cordonnier. Il était le fils de Jean Dessaint dit Saint-Pierre, qui avait épousé Marie-Josette Grégoire à Saint-Joachim de Châteauguay, au sud-ouest de Montréal, le 15 janvier 1821.

Théophile faisait partie de la sixième génération des descendants de Pierre Saint-Pierre, originaire de Saint-Martin-du-Pont, de l'archevêché de Rouen en Normandie. L'ancêtre Pierre, fils de Michel Saint-Pierre et de Françoise Engran, avait quitté la France avant 1666; il avait épousé Marie Gerbert le 24 avril 1679 à Sainte-Famille (Ile d'Orléans) et ils avaient eu quinze enfants (deux morts jeunes et treize mariés).

Au dix-huitième siècle, le nom de la famille a subi plusieurs transformations : de Saint-Pierre, Desimpierre, Desin, Dessen, Dessaints, Dessaint.

Toujours est-il que Théophile a épousé Mathilde Damours à Clarence Creek le 24 novembre 1856. Mathilde était la fille d'Antoine Potvin dit Desamours et de Lucie Nantel, établis à Cumberland dans les années 1850. Mathilde avait épousé Pierre Hébert à Buckingham le 20 novembre 1853, mais Pierre était mort quelques semaines avant que leur fille Rose ne soit baptisée le 20 janvier 1855.

Théophile et Mathilde ont eu cinq fils et quatre filles. En 1870, la famille est allée vivre sur une ferme achetée l'année précédente dans la deuxième concession (lot 11). En 1876, la famille s'est établie définitivement dans la quatrième concession (lot 11).

Camille, un des fils de Théophile et de Mathilde, a acheté la terre paternelle en 1890. En 1900, Camille a épousé Amanda Poupart à Sarsfield et ils ont eu cinq enfants. En 1942, Camille a vendu la ferme à son fils Jean-Noël, qui à son tour l'a vendue à son fils Robert en 1980. Cette belle ferme plus que centenaire demeure donc le patrimoine de la famille Dessaint, une des familles pionnières du canton de Cumberland.

Robert Serré

BONNE ET HEUREUSE ANNÉE!