

# The Caboose

Newsletter of the Cumberland Township Historical Society  
Bulletin de la Société historique du canton de Cumberland  
355 Duvernay Drive, Orleans, Ontario K1E 2N7

**Vol. XI, No. 5**  
**ISSN 1203-147X**

**March 1999**

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Published every two months

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## **LAST MEETING**

A working meeting was held on January 6 at the Cumberland Public Library. It was a blustery winter evening, and our president, Ruth Parsons, was pleasantly surprised to see six other people gathered round the table to slip clippings into protective covers, discuss a few business items and enjoy the snack she had brought for the occasion.

## **NEXT MEETING**

Our next meeting will be a visit of the City of Ottawa Archives at its new location in Whitton Hall, at 111 Sussex in Ottawa, on Wednesday evening, March 10, at 7:00 o'clock. Whitton Hall is now the home of three other archives, namely those of the Ottawa Branch of the Ontario Genealogical Society, of the Société franco-ontarienne d'histoire et de généalogie and of the Société d'histoire et de généalogie d'Ottawa. People can park on side streets nearby, or use the underground parking for a small fee. Everyone is welcome to come along!

## **FEATURE ARTICLE**

### **An Early Baptist Church in Russell County** by Bob Serré

The Baptist Church is a descendant of the Anabaptist movement which appeared in Germany in the 16th century. It distinguishes itself from other Christian churches by its emphasis on self-governing, independent congregations, on concrete evidence of Christian rejuvenation from would-be members, and on baptism by complete immersion under water.

Baptists were among the first missionaries who provided spiritual nourishment to settlers in the Ottawa Valley. As early as 1815, a Baptist church was established among Scottish immigrants at Breadalbane, some 30 miles south of Riceville in Eastern Ontario.

Then, in 1823, a man named John Edwards settled in Clarence Township, where James Fox had first taken up land in the 1790s. At that time, the settlement was called Fox's Point.

John Edwards was born in Scotland in 1780. As a young man living in Edinburgh, he was strongly influenced by the preaching of James Haldane, who with his brother Robert had converted from the Congregationalist to the Baptist Church. At the age of 39, John Edwards left England, and emigrated to America with his wife and children, staying for some time in Kingston. After making an exploratory trip through Eastern Ontario in 1822, he moved to Fox's Point the following year with some other immigrants.

John Edwards began his spiritual ministry almost immediately, paddling his canoe to settlements on both sides of the Grand River, including those at Buckingham and Cumberland.

A book entitled *The Marriage Registers of Upper Canada/Canada West* (volume 6, Ottawa District), by Dan Walker and others, lists a number of marriages solemnized by Reverend John Edwards of the Clarence Baptist Church, including some marriages of Cumberland settlers: William Dale to Mary Lough (1 November 1833), William Edwards to Ann Cameron (2 January 1837).

John Edwards died in 1842 at the age of 62. His oldest son, John Jr., continued his ministry among the growing settlements of the Ottawa Valley. There had been a major religious revival centred around Fox's Point in 1835, when John Edwards Sr. was 55 years old. In 1868, there was to be another great revival, which would cause division within the Clarence Church and give rise to a new phase in the evolution of a movement called the Plymouth Brethren, but that story will have to wait for another issue of *The Caboose*.

Readers who want to know more about the early Baptist church in Russell County will find much of interest in two books at the Ottawa Public Library (Ottawa Room): (1) *Correspondence and Papers on Various Subjects*, published in Peterborough in 1882 (thoughts and reminiscences of William Edwards, son of Reverend John Edwards); (2) *My Old Home Church in Rural Ontario*, published in Edmonton in 1937 (recollections of Reverend C.C. McLaurin).

### **DID YOU KNOW?**

Until about 11,000 years ago, much of Eastern Canada was covered by glaciers; much of the land was submerged under glacial lakes and seas like the Champlain Sea until about 7000 B.C. [Source: Peter HESSEL. *The Algonkin Tribe. The Algonkins of the Ottawa Valley: An Historical Outline*. Arnprior, Kichesippi Books, 1987, page 6]

## EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

We extend our deepest sympathy to Ruth Parsons, our President, and to Greta Scharfe-Hill, member of our Society, on the death, last January 13, of their mother, Janet Scharfe (nee McMillan).

## 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 Evening Journal* of Friday, August 12, 1892 (available at the Ottawa Public Library).

[page 1]        DIED - DUNNING at Cumberland, Ont., Friday, August 5th, 1892, G.G. Dunning, aged 82 years and 7 months.

[page 4]        DEATH OF MR. G.G. DUNNING  
Cumberland has lost one of its oldest inhabitants. Mr. Dunning was an almost lifelong resident in the township and was for many years a prominent farmer and lumberman, being a few years ago quite wealthy owning no less than 3,000 acres of land in Cumberland township. He was also a justice of the peace and one before whom many cases were tried and stern justice meted out, for Mr. Dunning was known as a terror to evildoers. Of late years the subject of this notice has not been in the best of health, for he had lived to a good old age, but changed circumstances had probably much to do with Mr. Dunning's later ailments, he having lost heavily like many others from the very operations which for so many years had placed him in an enviable position.

## BY THE WAY...

Six brave souls surprised me for our January "working" meeting. We ran out of work in about half an hour, and had a great discussion for the rest of the time... Thank you.

My dear mother Janet passed away January 13, 1999, so I am a little scattered these days. Please forgive my inattentiveness.

We started moving into our new home in February, so if you are able to help with sorting and filing, please let me know... The room will not be open to the public until we have achieved some semblance of order. Thanks to all who are pitching in.

We will have a table at Gene-O-Rama, March 25 and 26, 1999. Hope to see you there.

Ruth Parsons, President

## QUOI DE NEUF?

La Régionale Ottawa-Carleton de la Société franco-ontarienne d'histoire et de généalogie a tenu son assemblée annuelle dans ses nouveaux locaux (la salle Whitton au 111 de la rue Sussex, Ottawa K1N 5A1), le dimanche 24 janvier 1999. Cette société très dynamique offre aux chercheurs une excellente bibliothèque d'histoire et de généalogie.

## VISAGES DU PASSÉ

Eusèbe Lafrance avait 56 ans environ, en 1882, lorsqu'il a acheté du docteur James Ferguson les 200 acres du lot 4 de la quatrième concession dans le canton de Cumberland. Trente ans auparavant, le 10 juillet 1852, Eusèbe avait épousé Caroline Valois à Vaudreuil, à l'est de Montréal.

Eusèbe Lafrance faisait partie de la huitième génération des descendants de Nicolas Pinel dit Lafrance, originaire de la Normandie. Nicolas avait travaillé trois ans en Acadie avant de s'établir à Sillery, à l'ouest de Québec, en 1650. L'année suivante, travaillant à Cap-Rouge, Nicolas avait eu la frousse de sa vie lorsque lui et son fils Gilles avaient été surpris par deux Iroquois. Son voisin, un nommé Boisverdun, avait tiré son fusil, et même s'il n'avait pas blessé les Iroquois, il avait permis à Nicolas et à son fils de se sauver.

Ce fils, Gilles Pinel, a épousé Anne Ledet à Québec en 1657. Trois générations se sont alors succédées à Neuville, au sud-ouest de Québec, suivies de deux autres générations à l'Île-Perrot au sud-ouest de Montréal. C'est à l'Île-Perrot que le nom de famille Pinel dit Lafrance est devenu simplement Lafrance.

Toujours est-il qu'Eusèbe Lafrance et Caroline Valois ont eu un fils appelé lui aussi Eusèbe, qui a épousé Marie-Anne Brault le 18 janvier 1875 à Saint-Louis-de-Gonzague, dans le comté de Beauharnois.

Eusèbe père et fils et d'autres membres de la famille se sont donc établis dans la quatrième concession du canton de Cumberland, mais peu de temps après, la famille a subi un dur coup. Marie-Anne, épouse d'Eusèbe fils, est morte en 1885; elle avait à peine 32 ans. Le 9 mars 1886, Eusèbe fils a épousé, en deuxièmes noces, Délia Robillard, fille de Jérémie Robillard et de Vitaline Leroux; le mariage a été célébré à Buckingham. En 1887, Eusèbe et Délia ont eu un fils appelé Émile, et l'année suivante Eusèbe a acheté de son père la partie sud de la terre familiale.

Émile Lafrance avait 26 ans lorsqu'il a épousé Éva Lepage, fille de Ferdinand Lepage et de Célia Cayer; le mariage a été célébré à Sarsfield le 18 novembre 1913. Émile et Éva ont élevé une nombreuse famille. En 1927, Émile a acheté la ferme de son père. Cette ferme plus que centenaire demeure le patrimoine de la famille Lafrance, qui compte six générations dans le canton de Cumberland.

Robert Serré