
THE CABOOSE



NEWSLETTER OF THE CUMBERLAND TOWNSHIP HISTORICAL SOCIETY (CTHS)

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March 2003

Spring is in the air

Spring is in the air and with it comes an improved edition of The Caboose. The first issue was well received. Recognition and thanks must be given to the past newsletter editor, Robert Serre. For five years, Bob researched, translated, edited and produced the newsletter thus establishing a solid foundation for The Caboose. Bob, Susan Flemming and Laurie McBurney are co-writers for the book on the History of Cumberland Township. Look for the launch in November (a great Christmas gift!).

The graphic format for The Caboose is fashioned by Randall Ash and his creativity and expertise is much appreciated. Continue to comment on The Caboose and do furnish me with new stories, family histories, corrections and interesting articles to include in future issues.

Jeannie Smith, Editor (gsmith2877@rogers.com)

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-Francois Beaulieu, President
- Randall Ash, Vice-president
- Robert Serre, Treasurer
- Jeannie Smith, Secretary and Newsletter Editor
- Verna Cotton, Director
- Dan Brazeau, 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

The Day the Earth Shook

Dr. James Ferguson and his wife Suzanna Rice McLaurin moved into their home, Chestnut Cottage, in March 1863 on land on Concession 14 OS. My Grandpa J. D. and father Doug were born there. In May, 1974, my husband Glen and I moved into our home which we built beside our cottage "Cedar Cabin" that Dad built in 1952, just after the "new highway" opened. Glen's family owned the farm east of Cumberland that ran south of the river on both sides of Canaan Road to Wilhaven. He had to cross cattle over that treacherous road daily for milking. Glen couldn't wait until he got his drivers' licence in 1956, so that he could keep up with his older brother Reg! The following tale is true... retold to me by men who were there! Thanks, to my brother-in-law Reg Smith and friend Allan Findlay, for the memories.

What a blast! No, it wasn't a party...it was a mess...of rock, mud and clay that took two months to clean up. The old CNR rail bed that ran parallel to the south shore of the Ottawa River was the route for the New Trans Canada Highway. The track, set in 1908 following a centuries old trail established by the Anishinabee (Algonquin), later became the worn pathway for lumbermen who emptied the landscape of forests in the early 1800's. Captain Archibald Petrie oversaw construction of the first road on this Indian trail in the 1850's. The steel train tracks were pulled up in the mid 1930's, due to the depressed economy, and were sold to Japan for scrap metal, only to return recycled as bullets in WW2. After the expropriation, surveying and clearing of land; the drawing up of plans, hiring of work crews and setting up of their camps, construction began on the "new" highway in 1948.

The river route showed little respect for man and machine. Rock had to be dynamited. Care had to be taken because clay, mud and land slid too easily into the flowing "Kitchissippi", La Riviere Grandes des Algoumens, the mighty Ottawa.

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Next meeting of the CTHS

Our next general meeting will be held on March 5th at the Queenswood Heights Community Centre at 7pm. Authors Laurie McBurney and Sue Flemming will provide us with further details on the development of the Cumberland book. Come join us, and be sure to bring a friend. Light refreshments, as always, will be served.

Introducing the Society's logo



We've created a logo to help identify the Society on printed materials, the website and elsewhere. Martin Roque, a local graphics artist volunteered to assist in creating a logo

that symbolizes the rural roots of our Township and the valuable heritage that is passed along from generation to generation. Thanks to Martin for all his efforts.

Society calendar...

For more information on these and other upcoming events, please contact any member of the executive committee.

March 5 th	CTHS General meeting; 7pm: Queenswood Community Centre
May 8 th	Ottawa Heritage Fair; Cattle Castle, Lansdowne Park
May 27 th	CTHS Annual general meeting; 7pm: Queenswood Community Centre

What's on at the Heritage Village Museum...

The Cumberland Heritage Village Museum is located just east of Cumberland Village at 2940 Old Montreal Road (Queen Street), Cumberland, Ontario. If you plan to visit the museum more than once you can get a yearly family membership for only \$25. Regular admission is \$5 for adults, \$3 for students and seniors.



May 17	Opening Day
May 24 & 25	Doors Open Ottawa
May 31 & June 1	Heritage Festival 2003
June 15	Trains, Planes and Automobiles
June 22	Cumberland Reunion
July 19	Fire Fighter Day
Aug. 30 & Sept. 1	A Corny Weekend
Oct. 11 to 13	Harvestfest
Oct 12	Ottawa Marathon
Dec. 8 to 21	An Old Fashioned Christmas

For more information call 613-833-3059 or visit the museum website at www.musecumberland.com.

The Family Tree

Considering the family tree,
It's not how high it reaches!
But, rather, it's how well the nuts
Are hidden by the peaches.

(Frank Walsh, National Enquirer)



ANNUAL MEMORIAL SERVICE

Dale's Cemetery, Cumberland

Sunday, June 8th, 2003 2:30 PM

Bring a lawn chair, enjoy the music.

In the event of inclement weather the service will be held at Cumberland Heritage Village Museum church, next door.

Information: Jeannie Smith 833-2877

President's notes... by Jean-Francois Beaulieu

The CTHS Board of Directors has been preparing for various summer events. As new members of the Canadian Heritage Information Network (CHIN), the CTHS will apply for funding for the Virtual Museum project. If we're successful, the grant will provide us with a computer and CHIN software that will enable us to digitize part of our collection. The Society now has a permanent website at www.cths.ca. At the AGM in May, the 2003-2004 Board of Directors will be elected. Heritage Walks will be planned as part of Doors Open Ottawa in May, and displays will be set up at the Heritage Fair and the Navan Fair. Vice-President Randy Ash and newcomer Director Dan Brazeau, a professional web page designer, have been working to revamp our website. The Society has also enlisted the help of local graphic artist Martin Rocque to create our new CTHS logo. Terry Craig, a CTHS member, will make digital copies of our Oral history cassettes as a summer project.

The CTHS Board would like to thank Bob Dessaint and Carol Proulx-Lafrance for their dedication over the last few years as Directors. Bob and Carol brought new ideas to the Society and now they have chosen to pursue other interests. I hope to see many of you at our next meeting, Wednesday, March 5th.

In March 1949, the rock promontory west of the old "Edgewater" curve was blasted to bits. The earth quaked for two minutes in a five-mile radius. The vibration followed the seam of limestone that ran north under the river to Ange-Gardien and south along the old "North Road" to Navan. Windows broke at Montpetites Store in Orleans. Dishes rattled in Anger. Cracks surfaced in the cement of basement walls and snow slid off building roofs in an avalanche of thunder. Earth and rock exploded into the river and a cottage disappeared forever. The "Rock Cut" was christened.

A Toronto firm, Findlay McLachlin, won the contracts to build the highway (Green's Creek to Taylor's Creek, Taylor's Creek to Rockland, Blair Road to Green's Creek). Manpower and materials were in short supply after WW2 and with the impending Korean War, so the crew, 75 cents hourly wage, was comprised of eager young lads and seasoned teamsters. Three bunk houses, temporary wooden shacks with twenty beds a piece and a woodstove, plus a cookhouse, remained for three years on the site by the Hydro lines (Place Centrum Blvd.). A construction road was well established by early 1949 and paved from Green's Creek to Taylor's. Adventurous daredevils often dragged there in the dark of night, darting around piles of gravel that had been dumped by Dibblees as deterrents for speed races. Trucks steadily hauled rock to the section of land just opposite the mouth of the Lievre River. The CNR had experienced landslides by the hydro towers when bringing electricity to Cumberland in 1930. Highway engineers ordered for rock to be blasted from the quarry at the end of Kelly Lane and hauled to the precarious site.

Holes were dug with a well driller, 75-100 feet deep into the ancient rock at the top of the bluff. It was a normal workday. Hank Blacklock supervised as Lawrence Jenkins and helper, Reg Smith, worked most of the day to pack 35 cases of dynamite. Fortified with courage, they used an elm branch pole to ensure contact was made between sticks of dynamite. Each case contained 100 sticks! Each stick had to be unwrapped carefully from its wax-paper casing. Nitroglycerine perfumed the air! The electric charge was fired but this failed to cause the expected concussion. In the ensuing tiny eruption, a large rock

wedged and disabled a stick of dynamite. No big bang. Things were checked out and more dynamite was ordered. It arrived a week later. Allan Findlay drove one of Stuart Martin's trucks and helped haul the explosives from Navan Train Station. The boxes were carefully placed and spaced, wedged by planks and blocks so that the cases wouldn't budge and burst. Trucks were dispatched ten minutes apart to ensure safety.

Forty-five cases of explosives, 4500 sticks, were poured into newly drilled holes that were 10 feet away from the original ones. That evening, workmen were ordered to remain in camp. Around 5:30 pm, Blacklock and Jenkins charged ahead without permission and set off the dynamite. You can imagine what happened! They ran like hell and never stopped for two weeks! Rock caved in and crashed into the river, breaking the thick sheet of ice over the freezing

water. Operator, Don MacEachern, could barely make out the boom of McLachlin's steam shovel. It was stuck solid on the shoreline, windshield smashed, surrounded by rock chunks. Minister for Department of Highways of Ontario, Conservative, George Doucette, demanded a police investigation to discover the reason for the kickback of limestone. This lasted one day! Blacklock and Jenkins were on vacation.



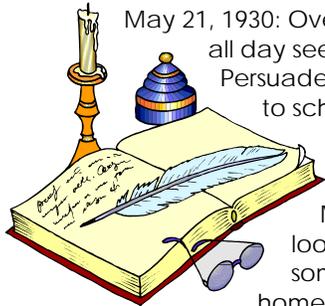
Doug and Anne Ferguson and daughters, 1950

Small holes were drilled and filled with little charges that would blow up larger rocks, and these gravel morsels were loaded onto trucks. The Martin brothers, Don and Stuart, hauled loads in twelve-hour shifts, and ate on the run. Gary Watson, Reg Smith and Allan Findlay and others, carted truckloads from the blast site to the landslide. One large rock could fill a truck box. Lester Edwards' clothes caught fire during the brush clean up! Insurance companies nearly went broke paying for damage. Hangovers were cured by chewing on a dynamite stick! No one was blamed and no one was injured.

Injuries and death have been numerous ever since the highway opened in 1952. The 'Killer Strip' has been blamed for many deaths. It is not the fault of the road. The blast has long settled...cautious drivers are in short supply. Traffic noisily flows by the old quarry. People are too preoccupied to notice the lime green icicles that flow out of the rock in March. Only the cliff face remains silent... a sentinel guarding the secrets of the past.

Diary Dialogues by Jeannie Smith

These excerpts are from my father Doug Ferguson's diary. After studying Dentistry in Toronto all winter, he returned to Cumberland and sought employment to pay for his university tuition.



May 21, 1930: Over to Masson & Buckingham all day seeing about a position. Persuaded Wallace Blaney to return to school. In evening up to see big landslide on CNR. (*mouth of Lievre*)

May 22-29: Have been on lookout for a means of earning some money since coming home but no luck, so far. Have written a number of letters to contractors etc. and attended Council Special Meeting at Leonard where decision of Bonrivere Contractors was made for Bear Brook project.

June 24: Began work with Mr. Wiggins, Engineer on Bear Brook Drainage Scheme from 10 am to 8 pm. Got proper curve made in soil over rock cut, Dunning's Farm then saw levels on Smith's Farm near Carlsbad.

June 25: Worked from 7 am to 6 pm fixing Concession line along Martin Brennan's farm.

June 26: Worked from 7 am to 3:30 pm at the Brook and seeing farmers then returned to Cumberland for instrument but began to rain so assisted in office on listing appeals and looking up amounts of assessment. Used our car, drove about 60 miles.

June 27: Began work at 7 am, out to meeting on CP railway tracks with men who disputed position of drainage ditch. Then visited some farms in Gloucester Township and went on to Ottawa. Car broke clutch.

July 21: In morning re-read by-laws with Mr. Wiggins, then saw George Moffatt, Bickerton and Urban Lancaster

July 22: Went to W. Russell's, out to see Farley & Perron, gathered councillors to view Philips & Surprenant's Farms, I remained at Navan from 2-30 pm -6:00 pm and helped Newton shingle Orange Hall.

July 23: Out to Bearbrook had carburetor screen repaired at McRae's. Made proper curve along rock cut where earth removed to greatest depth. Out to Vars. Visited Robert Lowe, John Bird in Navan, W. H. Cox, also Mr. Cotton, walked over Mr. Clark's farm measuring land.

Aug. 1: Left Cumberland for Bear River, delivered information as to grade depth in new drilling to Dan McKinnon from Lester Hayes farm, saw Mr. Walsh, Mr.

Johnston where stack going. Talked with Napoleon Foubert, Mr. Trudeau and Mr. Leroux .

Aug. 2: Picked up William Clark of Navan and measured his benefited land then saw Mr. Cotton, also Mr. Philip Allard, Donat Surprenant, Mr. Waddell, Mr. Cameron. Had dinner at Findlay's in Navan.

April 24, 1932: Learned from Arthur Dunning of the fire in Cumberland in which Laframboise garage and our Gospel Hall were burned. He saw it in Toronto Star.

April 26: Mother wrote and told me all about the fire in Cumberland when Laframboise's garage and our Hall bldg. burned through spring bonfire spreading in high wind. (Correction from last Caboose - Watson's hotel did not burn down.)

My Grandpa, J.D. Ferguson made diary entries daily until his death in April 1958.

Sat July 5, 1941: Douglas, Anne and Suzanne come from Ottawa about 5 pm. He gave soldiers a drive. Some officers come from Ottawa, near John Watson's to recruit men for the army.

May 26, 1950: Fred still working on fencing of Trans Canada Highway Road.

May 27, 1954: 33 above W. H (Herb) Lough dies. Rise 6 am before Fred goes to work on the highway. Get drive in car to McEachern's, walk to Martin's Corners, F. Hodges drives me in to Chas. Hodges' house where I have dinner and visit. C Hodges drives me to M. Cox; Mrs. Elliott gives me drive home.

Tues. May 8, 1956: 26 above F coldest 8th May in 56 or 66 years. (Water freezes at 32 F)

Fri. April 22, 1955: I attend Maple Hall Shareholders meeting, also Dale's Cemetery Meeting, one at 8 pm the other at 8:30. John Sharkey is chairman of first, I am chairman of last mtg. Those present John Sharkey, John Dunning, John Ferguson, Hector MacMillan, Eldred Hayes, Robert Russell, Miss Catherine Dunning secretary. Mrs. Norman Smith (*my future mother-in-law!*) calls with eggs, Art Watson asks for Fred.



Back: Fred, James Jr., J.D., Doug
Front: Dr. James Ferguson, William Helmer (1917)



Obituary 1874

McLaurin-At Cumberland, Ontario, on the morning of Nov. 8th inst., John Rice McLaurin, Barrister &c, youngest son of Peter McLaurin Esq., and the late Maria Rice and late of the law firm of Estee & McLaurin, San Francisco, Cal. Brother of Mr. Abner Rice McLaurin, Mrs. Susanna (Dr. James) Ferguson and Mrs. Maria (William) Dunning.

The deceased was admitted to the Bar of the Province of Quebec in the spring of 1868, having graduated in McGill College the same years, practised his profession in San Francisco, Cal., during five years, returned to Canada in the summer of the present year and being admitted to the Bar of Ontario in September last was about opening an office in Ottawa City at the time he was seized with typhoid fever, and after an illness of two weeks, he departed this life at his father's residence, Cumberland (Cameron's Point), deeply regretted by his sorrowing friends and by all who had ever cultivated his acquaintance.

The Factory

Information on this story came from an article by William Birch, 1968, in the Canaan Binder, as well as from chats with local residents.

It was in the year 1903 or perhaps a year later that one William F. Empey, a general store keeper in the Village of Hammond, Ontario, in Clarence Twp decided to do something for the benefit of his customers. Since many of the customers came from the adjoining Township of Cumberland it's quite understandable that his thought turned in that direction. However, we have no real knowledge if this was his own idea or if the plan was first thought of by some of the farmers concerned to build a cheese factory which would serve the surrounding community. We do know that in the year 1903-04 the site was chosen and the factory erected on the east side of the first line road in Cumberland Township almost directly in a straight line between the Villages of Hammond and Leonard. A site was chosen on the northwest corner of lot 15 in the first concession of

Cumberland. This farm was owned by Joseph Watson, one of the earliest settlers of the district and Mr. Empey made plans to employ a recent graduate of Kingston Dairy School, Frank Reid.

Mr. Reid established himself as cheese maker in 1905. A few years later he purchased the factory, got married and built a house. He and his wife raised a family of three girls and a son and continued to make cheese each summer until 1920 when he sold the factory to Sylvio Belanger. The Belanger family lived and worked at this location until 1945. In the Spring of 1963, a young Dutch Canadian, Karst Renia and his bride, moved into the Belanger house and the old factory was demolished. Albert Belanger operated a cheese factory near Sarsfield on Colonial Road from 1958 to 1972. Tessiers had a cheese factory at Innes and Frank Kenny Roads. Farmers would get whey from Boucher's cheese factory at Beckett's Creek. As the roads improved, trucks were able to travel at a faster pace to pick up milk and deliver it to city dairies.

Newspaper clipping in the bible of Dr. James Ferguson —

A Curious Development (1875)

Mr. Edwards, the Liberal Candidate for Russell, Accused of an Illegal Practice

The friends of Mr. C. H. Mackintosh, Conservative candidate for Russell, claim to have discovered a handle for effective use against his Liberal opponent, Mr. W. C. Edwards. It is stated that Mr. Edwards has for a number of years been paying his employees, at his mills at Rockland and Clarence, in paper money of his own, good only at his own stores in those places. By



W.C. Edwards Lumber Mill, Rockland, Ontario (19th century)

this means he, of course, obtains all the custom of his own employees and on his own terms. The practice is, of course, illegal. Mr. Mackintosh states he has samples of the money in question in possession to prove the facts.

Navan Women's Institute

The information for this article was provided by Verna Cotton, Tweedsmuir Curator, Navan Women's Institute

The Women's Institute was initiated by Adelaide Hoodless, who strongly believed women should be able to study and learn about many facets of home life, just as men studied farming. The first meeting was held in Squire's Hall in Stoney Creek, Ontario on February 19, 1897. Between 1897 and 1900, only two more institutes were organized but from 1900 on the movement spread rapidly throughout the province. By 1920 there were 925 branches, each working "For Home and Country." The women's movement spread to the provinces and was eventually Canada-wide, and then worldwide. The Associated Country Women of the World came into being in 1933.

The Navan Women's Institute became a part of this valuable women's movement on December 19, 1931 when the first meeting was held at Navan Public School. The first President was Miss Mary Rathwell. At that time 17 ladies joined, and the yearly fee was 25 cents. Since then the Institutes have remained true to their fundamental objectives, but have tried to direct and adapt their programs to meet the needs of rapidly changing times. There is still focus on home economics, health, agriculture, other industries, citizenship, education, cultural interests, local history, and a broadening concern for human welfare the world over.

Of the many projects we've been involved in over the years, one of particular pride for us is the Tweedsmuir History Book, which is compiled by each branch to give a record and history of the people and activities in its community. In fact, the Ontario Department of Education had recognized the books as authentic sources of material for students of pioneer history. Another project undertaken by the Institute is called ROSE -- Rural Ontario Sharing Education. The ROSE program reaches out to communities to help educate people about health issues and concerns. Other local events we've sponsored include a well-attended Community Evening in 2002 with a local doctor speaking on ovarian cancer, and an upcoming information evening

in March on menopause. Other examples as to the widening of the programs we offer include a recent information session on Kyoto. And we've been to Williamstown to view and contribute to the 'Invitation Quilt of Belonging.'

We are very proud of our organization and feel a deep sense of satisfaction that we have tried in as many ways as possible to be part of the circle of contributing, accomplishing, and receiving the rewards of our involvement, and that we continue to carry on the legacy started so long ago.

Congratulations to CTHS Director Verna Cotton who received recognition for her devotion to local heritage at the Cumberland Community Builders' Awards Evening, Sat. Feb. 22nd. Verna has made an enormous contribution to the preservation of history in Cumberland Township.

Contact us

If you have any 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:

- Jean-Francois Beaulieu, President (833-2245)
jeanf@storm.ca
- Randall Ash, Vice-president (833-3207)
randall2620@rogers.com
- Robert Serre, Treasurer (749-0607)
belser@magma.ca
- Jeannie Smith, Secretary and Newsletter Editor (833-2877) gsmith2877@rogers.com
- Verna Cotton, Director (835-2490)
- Dan Brazeau, Director (834-8336)
danbrazeau@rogers.com

Check out our new website address –

www.cths.ca

Over the next couple of months we'll be re-designing and updating our website to give it a new look and to provide CTHS members and the community at large with interesting and informative articles and links of historical significance.

A stranger in a strange land

While searching the web, Kim Taylor found this article on his Great Uncle Leslie. Kim, eldest son of Doug Taylor, grew up on the Taylor Farm. The Taylors farmed at Taylor Creek since 1854 on lots 31/32. Issac Taylor married Caroline Fraser, their children were Ernest, Leslie, Louisa (mother of Verna Cotton), Laura, Ethel and Mabel. Hattie died in infancy.

(Photos courtesy of Veterans Affairs Canada)

Bramshott Camp, England

July 1st, 1916

Dear Ethel:

Well here we are in camp at last and I can tell you we weren't sorry to get settled down once more. We got into Liverpool on Wednesday night June 22nd and disembarked the next morning and got onto the train and came straight out to camp. We got off the train about six o'clock and just had a little over a mile to walk. It started to rain just as we got to camp and as there wasn't nearly enough tents up to accommodate us all they piled from sixteen to nineteen men in each tent and as they are only eight men tents, you can imagine the shape we were in with all our kits. They are old tents and the rain came through in different places and although things looked rather blue, it didn't dishearten us for we carried on and acted foolish, and I laughed until I was sore. We are still in the same shape, but some of the lads slept outside last night, so we had a good sleep. However they are gradually getting things into shape.

I can't tell you anything about Liverpool for we only passed through it on the train and nearly all the way underground at that. The dock there is between eight and ten miles long and there are hundreds of ships



sailing round there all the time. The trip from Liverpool to camp was dandy and I sure did enjoy myself. The most of the country is just like a large garden. It is simply immense, especially between Liverpool and Birmingham. The land is very rolling and down round here it is almost in its wild state, much like a lot of

the country up the line, on the way out West. There are very few fences, but the fields are divided by hedges and they look so nice. The crops are away ahead of Canada, for the most of the wheat is heads out and laying so pretty, well in most places. It seems funny in an old country like this to see the old fashion way they have of their work. Nearly every thing is done with carts and they hitch their horses one ahead of the other. The buildings are very small but



everything is strange looking and you would laugh if you saw their railroad trains here. The cars are small, and they are divided into four compartments and each compartment holds eight persons. The seats run right across the car and you enter from the side. The engines are very small also, and very simple, but say, they can travel. Had a



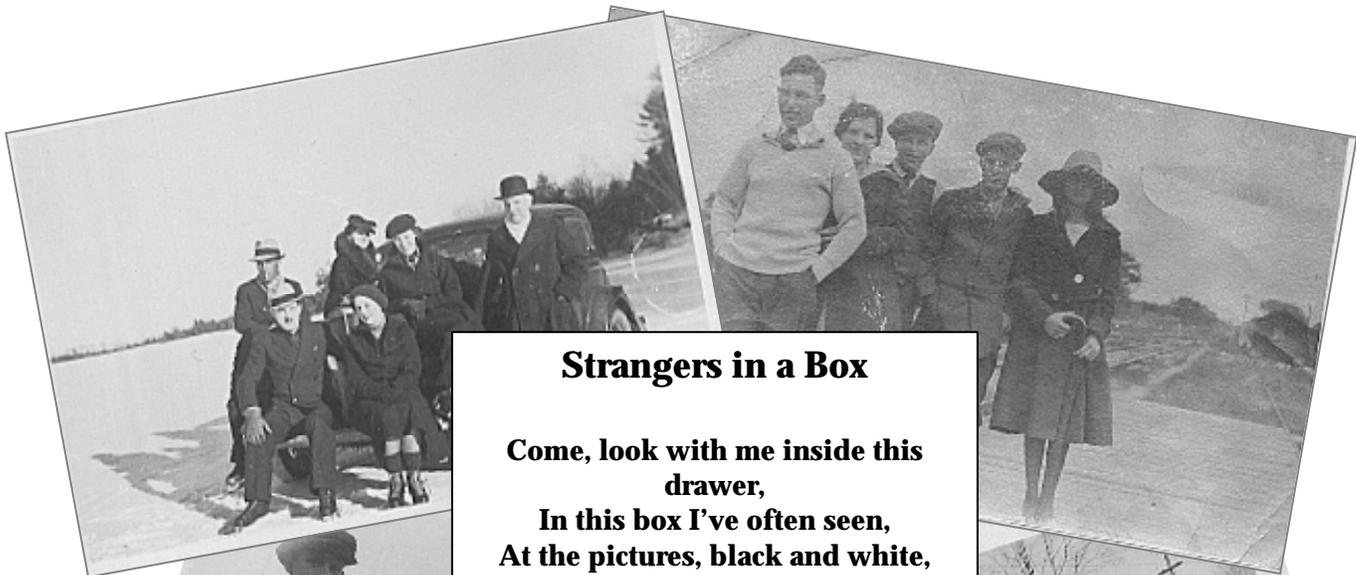
long march today and am tired. Will write another letter tomorrow if I have time.

Pte. Robert Leslie Taylor WW1, born July 29, 1884. Wounded at the River Somme, France on November 13, 1916. Died in England February 13, 1917 age 32 1/2. Buried in Yorkshire, England. Second child of Isaac W. Taylor, Jr. and Caroline Fraser of Cumberland, Ontario. Brother of Ernest Taylor, Louisa Coburn, Laura Carson, Ethel Taylor and Mabel Taylor

Visited our local history room lately?

Have you ever spent time looking through the shelves of material in the CTHS room at the Library? Be prepared to spend a good part of the day researching. Time flies quickly when you become absorbed in history! Over the years, dedicated volunteers have documented, written and organized material. You will find information on Cumberland families, churches, groups, maps, clubs, sports, businesses as well as scrap books, newsletters, newspaper clippings and various historical references.





Strangers in a Box

Come, look with me inside this
 drawer,
 In this box I've often seen,
 At the pictures, black and white,
 Faces proud, still, serene.
 I wish I knew the people
 These strangers in the box,
 Their names and all their memories
 Are lost among my socks.
 I wonder what their lives were like,
 How did they spend their days?
 What about their special times?
 I'll never know their ways.
 If only someone had taken time
 To tell who, what, where, or when,
 These faces of my heritage
 Would come to life again.
 Could this become the fate
 Of the pictures we take today?
 The faces and the memories
 Someday to be passed away?
 Make time to save your stories,
 Seize the opportunity when it
 knocks,
 Or someday you and yours could be
 The strangers in the box!

Courtesy of Norfolks-The Newsletter of the
 Norfolk OGS

