THE CABOOSE

NEWSLETTER OF THE CUMBERLAND TOWNSHIP HISTORICAL SOCIETY (CTHS)

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Editor's message (Dorothy-Jane Smith)

Want to help keep the CTHS alive and growing? Talk to us about positions on the Board, particularly if you are interested in creative work and would like to edit The Caboose. You won't be carrying the work alone but will be part of a group, working together on ideas and research. In this issue of The Caboose, our spotlight is on the pre-1970 general store. Interviews from the 1990s and today give us stories about the Leduc store in depression-era Sarsfield, and modernizing the 1950s Lancaster store in Cumberland Village. We remember with Ross Bradley how store families were part of their community. And of course, the stores served families, like the Rickerd family in 1940s Vars, as told by Verna Kinsella. And make sure you check out the new column we have for you. Jeannie Smith brings us the stories behind the houses of the Cumberland Heritage Village Museum, starting with the Foubert House!

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 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

Before 1960, every country town and village had a school, a post office and at least one general store. The oldest Cumberland Township store still operating today has been owned by John and Afifa Haddad since 1979. It was previously Dunning's and might date back to William Wilson, who opened a store in 1848 and later partnered with W. W. Dunning. (Joan Lancaster collection)

Next meeting of the CTHS

The Annual General Meeting will take place on Wednesday, May 5th at the Navan Curling Club: 1305 Fairgreen Avenue, Navan, Ontario. Denis Perrault of Domaine Perrault Winery in Navan will be our guest speaker. Doors will be open at 6:30 for a start-time of 7 P.M. Be sure to bring a friend along. Light refreshments, as always, will be served.

Society calendar

For more information on these and other upcoming 2010/11 events, please contact a member of the executive committee or visit our website at www.cths.ca.

May 5th	AGM; Navan Curling Club; Guest speaker: Denis Perrault
At the Cumberland Heritage Village Museum	
May 16th	May 16 – Opening Day
May 29th – 30th	2010 Heritage Power and Country Festival
June 19th	Heritage Trades Festival
July 11th	Emergency Protective Services Day
July 18th	Car Show
July 24 – 25th	Celebration of the 150th Anniversary of Orleans
CTHS meetings	Unless other stated, all meeting are at 10th Line Road Police Station 2nd floor Boardroom. Doors open by 6:30 and start time 7:00 pm. Meetings are schedule for: September 1, 2010; November 3, 2010; January 5, 2011 (snow date January 12th)

Check for events at the Cumberland Museum: www.Ottawa.ca/residents/heritage/museums/Cumberland

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 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:

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- Verna Cotton, Director (835-2490)
- Jeannie Smith, Director (833-2877)
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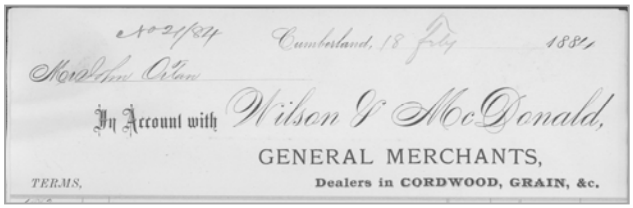
- Dan Brazeau, Website

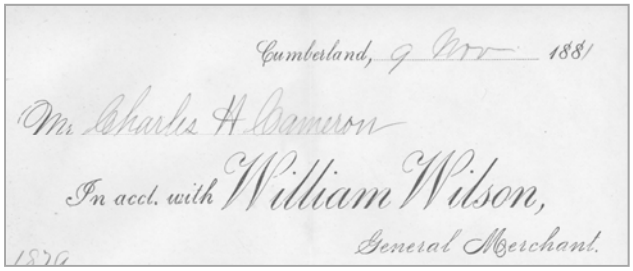
Ontario's General Stores

by Dorothy J. Smith

Often the first sign of organized life in a new area was a general store. So when settlement in Cumberland Township began in significant numbers in the 1820s, general stores followed within twenty years. Since these stores drew the attention of the local tax assessor, we can track them in Cumberland Township's municipal tax roll. The earliest appeared in 1841 when two stores opened up, a short-lived store run by a John McKinnon on lot 12 concession 1 old survey and a store on lot 13 run by George G. Dunning, presumably out of his one-story hewn timber house for which he was taxed that year. The Post Office followed when Dunning became postmaster in 1844.



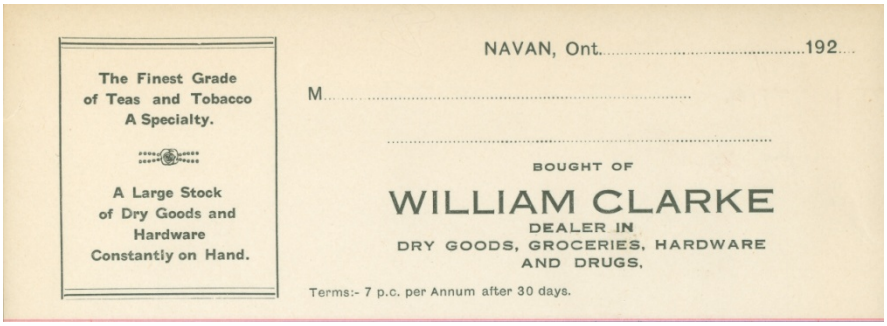
In 1848, William Wilson came to Cumberland Village and opened a store at its east end. In one form or another there was a Wilson general store in the Village for the remainder of the nineteenth century. (Cumberland Heritage Village Museum collection)



This sudden eruption of general stores in the 1840s was a trend in eastern Ontario. Catherine Parr Traill, in writing about her life near Peterborough in the 1830s, mentioned the great growth of general stores there. Many began as a room in the merchant's house. Here was sold all that was not produced on the local farms. The importance of merchants to a settlement was recognized by her in a letter she wrote on September 11, 1832: “The storekeepers are the merchants and bankers of the places in which they reside. Almost all money matters are transacted by them, and they are often men of landed property and consequence...”

Merchants were paid by a mix of cash, farm produce and sometimes labour—the blacksmith might shoe the merchant's horse to pay his bill at the store. Providing credit could be hard on the merchant who

had to pay the wholesalers in the nearby large town or city in hard money. But it was a necessity in an economy where there was little currency in circulation. Coins were not minted in the Upper Canada (Ontario) until 1858 and paper money only started to be printed in 1866. If you had money in your pocket before 1858, you probably had a mix of British pounds, shillings and pence, American dollars and half dollars, plus some Spanish, Portuguese and French coins. You also more than likely had some bank notes and coins produced by private banks in Montreal and Toronto. Making change was not only arithmetically challenging, it could be difficult to find the right assortment of coins to make up a specific amount.



Stores had appeared in the newer settlements back of the river by the 1860s. William Clarke built his store in Navan in 1901 but the first store in Navan, Visser's Store, started in 1862. (Cumberland Heritage Village Museum collection)

The solution was to run a tally of each customer's debts for goods purchased against payments made. At regular intervals, often at harvest time, the merchant added up debts versus credits to establish who owed how much and payment in full was requested, even if perhaps not always made. A study of the 1830s accounts of two stores in St Andrews East, Quebec across from Hawkesbury (by Béatrice Craig - see sources) show that there was cash around to pay off debts, especially when the canals were being built and government money was lifting the local economy. But, even so, up to 20% of accounts might be settled by payment in kind—in the early days wood ashes and potash which were important cash by-products from cutting down and burning trees to create a farm, but also eggs, butter and barrels of preserved meat (the pork barrel of political fame). These goods were then sold in Montreal in the early 1800s and to Ottawa Valley lumber shanties. To further complicate the poor merchant's book-keeping, about 4 to 6% of a customer's account would involve a third party. A farmer's debt to the local blacksmith or tanner might be settled by assigning to that artisan the credit the farmer had built up with the merchant through payments in kind. It was this process of exchange that made the general merchant of a small town the centre point for the economic circulation of goods between producer and consumer in the early nineteenth century.

General stores often were the setting for the post office but they could provide other services. As banks started to take root in nineteenth century Canada, they extended themselves into the countryside by using the network of general stores to set up a wicket as their outlet in a small town. Of course, the supremacy of the general store in the economic life of rural Ontario only went on for so long. The magazine, The Beaver, claims the golden age of the general store in Canada was the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and sees its demise with the automobile and catalogue shopping. But the stories told here show that the general store thrived in Cumberland Township well into the middle of the twentieth century.

The Leduc Store of Sarsfield

In 1995, Anne Gonneau and Sonya Bergervan interviewed Jos & Rollande Leduc who had wonderful tales to tell about the store their family built in Sarsfield. The Leducs story starts with his father, Alfred Leduc, who had bought two farms in Sarsfield in 1898 at the suggestion of his wife Selima (Bertrand). Having grown up in Sarsfield, she was tired of Montreal life and wanted to return to the country while Alfred was tired of working in the office of a Montreal grocery wholesaler. So they came to Sarsfield and farmed but Alfred's education, including a commercial course in Montreal, fitted him well for taking on a general store. Thus it was that, in 1919, Alfred Leduc bought the store in Sarsfield, just west of the Sarsfield Hotel on Colonial Road. While this building burned before 1982, it had played an important role through the depression years.

Jos' brother Albert Leduc took over the store from their father in 1922. Jos worked for Albert for 40 years, starting in 1930, and then took over the store himself. They sold largely groceries and farm goods such as animal feed and farming work clothes—overalls, boots and gloves. In 1920, they put in Texaco gas pumps. They ran the Post Office out of the store, with Rollande being the last postmistress in the family. Jos' father, Alfred, also worked two days a week, operating a wicket for the Banque Provinciale du Canada (National Bank of Canada) at the back of the store.

People bartered, of course, for goods. In 1924, Jos and his brother would drive up to Ottawa on Saturday in their car to sell in the market the butter and eggs they had received as payment on

accounts. Then, in 1925, they got a truck. Before then, they had brought their inventory in by rail, going to Leonard with the horses a couple of times a week to pick up the freight. Once they had a truck, they could buy cheaper by going direct to Freemans on George Street and National Grocers in Ottawa.

The Depression was a hard time in Sarsfield. Jos and Rollande remembered how their neighbours had no money and had to buy everything on credit. Municipal relief gave a dollar a day for which the men worked with picks and shovels on work projects grading French Hill Rd, planting the Larose Forest and cutting wood. Jos estimated that his brother lost about $35,000 over the course of the depression for, while some farmers could pay after the harvest, not all could. Government relief for the farmers involved cutting farm mortgages. A farmer facing the loss of his farm could go to court and ask the judge to cut the amount outstanding in half. If the merchant had secured the farmer's store debt on the farm via a "concordat", these too could have the principle outstanding cut in half. Still, for all the Leducs lost money, they also saw how it was worse for many local families. Jos remembered a neighbour who had six or seven children and all there was to feed them were potatoes that a man in Sarsfield had given them in the fall and the daily ten-pound pail of milk his own father gave them. That was all they had to eat. At Christmas, the Leducs also sent them pork and bread.

There were good times too, though. Their general store was the first place in the village to get in the phone, then the radio and later a television set. Jean-Noël Dessaint had told Anne Gonneau about listening to hockey games at the Leduc store. Jos remembered this well, how people came in to listen to the score. Today, the store is gone but we can imagine the store customers, sitting in the centre of the store near the store, talking, listening to the game, and talking some more. The general store had an important role to play in cultivating a sense of community in the early years of the twentieth century.

The Modern Lancaster's of Cumberland Village

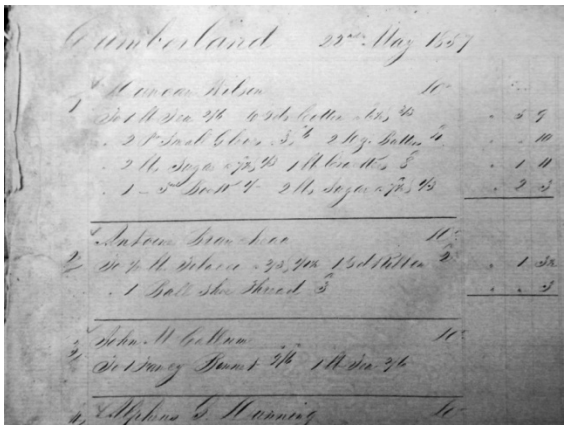
with Joan and Doug Lancaster

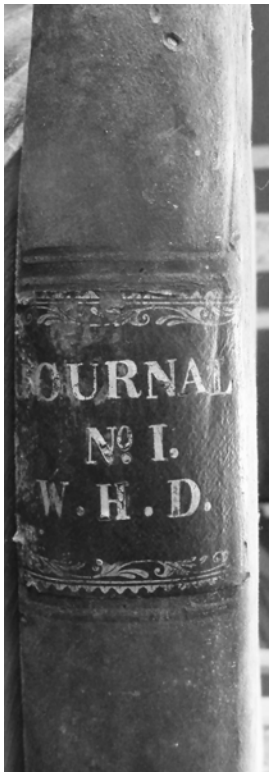
The vacant lot at the corner of Cameron and Old Montreal Road was once a place of business as well as a family home. Harvey and Stella (Knox) Cameron started a general store there about 1909. However, the Cameron family had acquired the house and all of lot 15 concession 1 old survey in 1842. Donald Cameron farmed the land until his death in 1855. His brother, John Stuart Cameron (marr. Ellen McMillan) later practiced his profession of county court clerk there, as well as farming and raising eight children. Only the youngest, Harvey, continued in the Village into the twentieth century.

The people of Cumberland Village shopped at Lancaster's from 1947 to 1965. Doug and June Lancaster sold to Bob Edwards who kept it for two years after which the store went through a number of owners. (Joan Lancaster collection)

Harvey Cameron ran the store he created until 1925 and then traded it with Bert McKeen for an Ottawa house. The McKeens expanded the business by opening a tea room but made few changes other than to close in the store porch. Since they left the original front store windows, when they sold ice cream in the summer they had to crawl through the window into the enclosed porch space to serve customers. Then, in 1945, the store was again traded for property in Ottawa.

This time, the trade was with Wilbert Rivington. Two years later, in 1947, he sold to his cousin, Howard Lancaster. Howard had been a manger of an Ottawa dairy who, on his return from soldering in World War Two, determined to go into business with his son Doug. A country store seemed the right opportunity. But, as Doug Lancaster points out, times were changing and the store had to change with it.





Joan and Doug Lancaster found the 1850s store account books of William H. Dunning in Lancaster's attic. As John Stuart Cameron acquired the building and farm by buying his siblings' share of their brother Donald's estate and was living in the building in 1871, it is possible that the family had rented the building to Dunning while settling the estate.

Some changes were forced upon the Lancasters. Harvey Cameron had become postmaster in 1912 and the McKeens had retained the position. However, Howard Lancaster was only able to keep it until December 1947 when the Post Office made Lesley Dunning postmaster. Some were changes they agreed to, but with reluctance. The National Bank asked Howard to take over their customers when R. J. Kennedy decided to give the bank business up, but Howard never felt it was the right for them. When he was asked to process loans for many of their own customers, with all the personal questions involved, he happily advised the bank to find another outlet. But, then there were the changes the Lancasters embraced as part of creating a twentieth century general store.

By 1947, Cumberland residents expected to buy a wider variety of packaged goods. Howard and Doug responded to this in stages. If they carried boxes of corn flakes but someone asked for shredded wheat, they would add that to their inventory. Slowly they built up a diverse range of stock. Then there were the new product ideas of the 1950s. Originally you bought a bottle of Coca Cola from the cooler and drank it there but they were told that people liked to buy a case of six to take home. Doug was skeptical but allowed two cases to be left just beside the cooler. By the time the company representative was back, the cases were long gone. From then on Coca Cola was sold for take home. All this meant the store had to be physically reorganized.

Like other general stores merchants, Howard and Doug had many strings for their bow. In the summer of 1950, they rented out cabins just to the east of the store. They also expanded the season for selling gas into the winter. (Joan Lancaster collection)

When Howard and Doug Lancaster came in 1947 the original store layout was still there; glass cases, two long wooden counters the length of the store, and odd bits of left-behind stock such as boots with buttons, no doubt dating back to Harvey Cameron. Under the counters were big wooden barrels on a hinge for swinging them out to ladle the loose product onto the scale, though they were no longer in use. But the Lancasters needed shelving. They found a woodworking place in Ottawa to build their shelves and they ripped out the counter, glass cases and barrels. The post office space, at the back right-hand corner of the store was taken out when they put in a meat counter.

After Doug married Joan (Barnett), the store continued to change. They became hardware sellers

when Lester Edwards asked about buying boxes of nuts and bolts for building wagon racks. They turned the cabins into sheds keeping cement in one and insulation in another. They started to sell appliances when a new resident asked Doug to deliver a washer, drier, fridge and stove to his laneway for so much over the cost. Doug decided to offer the same deal generally, delivering at night after the store was closed. All this was on top of the traditional general store products of groceries, yard goods, coal oil, stove pipes, window glass panes and screens.

People largely bought with credit and paid at the end of the month. Yet the Lancasters paid their suppliers in cash—Canada Packers had to be paid weekly and the gasoline company was paid on delivery. Still, competition was not a problem in those days. If Dunning's carried a product Lancaster's did not, Doug or June would say to go down the street rather than send customers to Ottawa. There was enough business for both stores. Doug feels that it is only in recent times that two well-operated stores could not survive in the one small community.

Death of a century building. Fire took out the roof on November 23, 1993 and the owners later tore it down. (D. & J. Lancaster collection)

On tearing down the building, the original log structure was exposed. The logs were 30 ft long, 18 inches high and 8 inches deep and as good as the day they had been cut. The Lancaster family saved some and made a crèche in remembrance of the old store that had sustained their family for so long.

The Bradley family and the J.T. Bradley Store of Navan

with Ross Bradley

Ross, Lorne and Marilyn, the three children of Morris and Elda Bradley, were raised next door to the Bradley store at 1230 Colonial and were the third generation sustained by that business. Bradley's was very much a family business with Ross' aunts and uncles, his grandmother, and his dad all to be found there most of the day. Somewhat like a family farm, a general store involved everyone in working long hours, six days a week. Only the Sunday closing laws gave them a day free.

Ross remembers that, even as a child of six or seven, there was always something to do, whether filling shelves or sorting bottles. Later, when he was about ten, he had graduated to writing up a bill and making change. But Ross never thought of himself as working at the store, simply because the family was always there. In fact, he found it a fun place to be. While it had the usual long wooden counters down both sides, there was an open space with chairs in the centre. Navan people would gather there to listen to the news or to Hockey Night in Canada on the store radio.

Even though Bradley's was open until 11 at night, they had a side business, transporting milk from Navan farmers to Ottawa's dairies, which had them up early. Ross went along with his father on these runs and enjoyed the people he met and the city sights. Then, right after delivering the milk to the dairies, they stopped the truck at the grocery wholesaler, then Murphy-Gamble's, and picked up inventory.

Bradley's mostly sold packaged groceries but sugar, both white and brown, dry peas, rice and flour were bought in bulk and kept under the counter in large wooden drawers. Most of the stock was not terribly exotic— apples bought in bulk and oranges that came in crates— but they also had a stalk of bananas hanging from a hook in the ceiling. Ross remembers a special knife with a curve in it that they used to cut off bananas for the customers.

Looking west along Colonial Road towards Trim, the original Bradley store is the second building to the right. It sits between the family home on the east and the Foresters hall on the west. More than one hundred years later, the firm is still going strong. (Verna Cotton collection and Bradley family collection)

The counter on the west side had groceries behind it and on the east side were the dry goods, mainly overalls, heavy work shirts and lots of gum rubber boots, good for working in mud. They had a freezer in which they kept Mello-rolls that they got from the dairy when delivering the milk. These were tubes of ice cream wrapped with paper. Ross remembers that you peeled the wrapping off one end, pushed it into the cone and then peeled off the rest for the customer. They transported the rolls to the store in dry ice which gave yet another pleasure for a small boy in a store family; watching the ice boil up and disappear on being thrown into the puddles outside after the rolls had been put away. The store also sold bulk cookies—chocolate marshmallow ones and maple leaf cookies—which Ross remembers eating when he was working in the store.

One job that was reserved for the adults was candling eggs. Farmers would bring in eggs in a basket and each egg was then held against a bright light to be checked for blood spots. As each was accepted, it was placed in a flat container holding a dozen and a half eggs. Six of these containers were then piled together to make a case. But there was not much payment in kind. The dairy farmers were paid by the dairies for their milk on the tenth day of the month and so could pay with cash. Still, credit was, just as elsewhere, part of the challenge of doing business. As a child, Ross was not aware of what it meant but he remembers his father telling him once that they were owed $10,000. A lot of credit records disappeared in the fire that destroyed the original building but many customers paid up, even though the records were gone.

The fire which destroyed the original store and the neighbouring Forester's Hall broke out on Saturday August 28, 1948 about 7 pm. There was no fire department in Cumberland Township, and all the family had was a fire extinguisher. A general call went out but the neighbouring fire departments in Gloucester and Ottawa did not show. It was the Township of Nepean's fire department that came from the other side of Ottawa. There was a lot of paint in the store and you could hear it exploding during the fire. In the end, the store was lost but they saved their house. Neighbours tried to save the furniture in the house by throwing it out the second floor windows but the furniture simply broke apart when it hit the ground. But the Bradley family did not sit around and mourn. Within a week they had built shelves and acquired stock to set up shop in the garage. And just as quickly, they got to work on building the store that is still there today.

BUSINES

THE OTTAWA CITIZEN, THURSDAY, JULY 2, 1998

PATRICK DOYLE, THE OTTAWA CITIZEN

John Bradley, right, runs the J.T. Bradley & Sons Ltd. store in Navan. When it was founded by John Thomas Bradley, left, with the legendary Bradley Cup, 100 years ago, flour, sugar, molasses and kerosene were sold in bulk; cappuccino and videos were not in the business plan, but nearly 100 years later, the store remains a big part of the community.

Celebrating a century

When store founder's great-grandson threw a party, the community came.

Desmond Brown reports

Navan

It was Ross' brother Lorne who chose to continue on in the family business. Their parents, though, insisted that all three children pursue higher education in

1931 - J.T. Bradley, Sr., Morris and Borden Bradley

Ross' grandfather, John Thomas Bradley, started the Bradley general store in Navan at 1220 Colonial Road in 1898. After he died in 1932, his sons, Morris and Borden, carried on the business until Borden's death in 1952 and Morris' death in 1975. (Bradley family collection)

Ottawa. With three or four grocery stores in 1950s Navan, the Bradleys had determined that there were limits on the number of family members who could be supported by the store. Their calculation paid off for the store has weathered the years and is still a Bradley family store.

1949 - Interior of new store with Morris Bradley by the shelves

In January 1949, on a night of freezing rain, the Bradley family celebrated their new store building by filling it with a couple of musicians and many friends and family for a night of dance. The new layout was more convenient and included a brand new, up-to-date cash register. (Bradley family collection)

The Stores of Vars

with Verna Kinsella

When you bought your groceries in a small town, you always knew the family who had sold you what you were eating for dinner. This was true for Verna Kinsella in the 1940s. There were three main general stores in town—Quesnel's, Tanner's and Hayes's. And her two good friends were Gwen Tanner and Helen Hayes. So when Helen Hayes came to supper, Verna's father, Evans Rickerd, teased by commenting on how tough the meat was. But Helen was quick to say that you didn't get it from Hayes's, knowing full well that her parents had the only store in town selling meat at that time.

While the Rickerd family bought their meat at Hayes's, they would go to either Tanner's or Hayes' for groceries. They bought mainly tea, rather than coffee, and rolled oats for porridge. Soup bones were a necessity for making soups. Molasses, flour and other such goods were available as bulk goods. To buy molasses, the Rickerds took up a jar to the store and filled it from a barrel. Desserts, of course, were home made by her mother, Luella (Richardson) Rickerd. They got bread at the bakeshop while ice cream came from the ice cream parlour. Since there were no freezers, and even the first fridges did not have freezer space for bricks of ice cream, it was always eaten immediately on arriving home.

The Quesnel's store building was built in Bearbrook in 1823 and moved to its current location at Farwell and Centre by horse and rollers. Quesnel's was the only Vars store to carry hardware and kerosene, along with dry goods and groceries. Despite changes over the years, Quesnel's still has the drawers under the counter where bulk goods, such as flour, were kept. (Verna Kinsella collection)

Milk came from a local farmer. They would go to his farm and fill up their quart bottles with unpasteurized

milk. They bought butter only at Christmas for baking shortbread. Regular fare for many town people was margarine to which you beat in the orange dye that came with it. People mostly grew their own vegetables but there was a farm woman who sold carrots and beets from a buggy that she drove around Vars. Verna also remembers picking and podding peas at a farm around the Russell Rd. The farm sent the peas to a factory where they were canned. The family paid for the peas, at 10 cents a can, when picking them up.

Friday night was the Rickerd's grocery night. They walked up to the stores with the big cloth shopping bags Verna's mother had made. In summer, they might stop and chat, if someone was sitting out on their verandah. Verna would also walk up to either Tanner's or Hayes' to buy candy when she had a nickel or a dime. She quickly learned that, if she just hung about when an older sister brought a boyfriend home from Ottawa on a Friday night, the boyfriend would give her another 10 or 15 cents to go to the grocery store. She might buy BB bat suckers with a few pennies or black pipe licorice with 5 cents. Then, she would end up black all over herself.

Farmers from the surrounding area came to town with a horse and buggy on Saturday night. The men might sit out in front of Tanner's on benches while the women did the groceries and the kids were getting their treats. The farmers might also stop to get their hair cut at the barber shop where Evans Rickerd worked evenings. Entertainment came along with shopping but it was in the form of "talk". The Tanners and their brother-in-law, Les Cuttler, who worked there had many stories to tell and there was a lot of teasing. The store owners knew everyone who came in and would carry people in periods of hard luck for a while.

Luella Rickerd made all their clothes from the yard goods she purchased at Tanners and Hayes's. Before the 1930s, there had been a milliner in Vars but by the 1940s everyone had to go into Ottawa for hats as well as shoes and ready-made clothes. Hats, of course were important for everyone wore one to church and for Easter service, everyone needed a new outfit. Usually people went to Freimans or if they wanted a bit more fashion, and to spend a bit more money, to Ogilvies. Verna still remembers her first store-bought piece of clothing was a bright red coat. When she out-grew it, her mother recycled it, making it over into a coat for Verna's niece.

At Tanner's (right), on Buckland Street, there were groceries, yard goods, and, if you cared to step up-stairs, the undertaker, Frank Tanner, and his caskets. Quesnel's store is shown above (Verna Kinsella collection)

The other important shopping "place" was the Eatons catalogue. Eatons delivered large items to the train station while small items came to the post office. The catalogue was where you went for Christmas gifts, as well as items such as furniture and appliances. One Christmas, Verna's mother was most annoyed when the station master told Verna that there was a package for them which he thought was skis. The skis, in fact, were intended as a present for Verna. Furniture could also be ordered locally for delivery to Vars. Verna's mother liked to buy furniture at the Maheu store in Embrun and Ormes in Ottawa. She especially loved going down into the basement at Ormes where they had their music department, for she was the organist at their church. The Rickerds traded a grand piano to get their first television from Ormes along with a chrome table and chairs to replace the wood set they had.

For the Rickerd family Eaton's catalogue and city shopping via an easy train commute was a supplement to the country general store, not competition. In this way, the general store was able to serve the local community well into the twentieth century in Cumberland Township.

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This is the house that the Fouberts built … but who really called it home?

by Jeannie Smith

The Foubert House at the Cumberland Heritage Village Museum tells us much about our history, starting with the township's first families. The Dunning and Foubert families established a settlement along the river in the first decade of the 19th century. Amable Foubert married Matilda Dunning in 1808 and their children built houses throughout the village. Amable's father Gabriel (son of Jean-Baptiste Foubert) was an independent fur trader on the Ottawa River. Matilda's father, Zalmon, arrived with his father Abijah in 1801 from Massachusetts. In 1807, the Dunnings sold Lot 14 Concession 1, old survey, to the Fouberts.

Descendents of the Foubert (or Faubert) family reside locally but the surname remains only in the street Faubert, which runs between Regional Road 174 and Old Montreal Road and jogs into Dunning Road. Originally there was a log house on the lot 14 Foubert farm. The farmhouse we see today at the Museum was built in 1915.

There is little information on the first decade of that house. We know that it was a Sears catalogue farmhouse and was built by Amable's great-grandsons, Napoleon (born 1858) and Nathan (born 1867) (children of Amable Jr and Sarah Capron). Cumberland museum students, José Mes and Pam Brooks, interviewed Napoleon's daughters, Sister Mary Rupert (Blanche) and Dorothy Grimes in 1979. They learned that Napoleon had been married to Ellen Swain and was a man of many trades. He ran the ferry between Cumberland and Masson, as well as being an accomplished carpenter, painter and a rural contractor. Ellen was a housemaid and babysitter for the Wilsons and raised ten children of her own. The students concluded that Napoleon was the 'N' Foubert who supplied the lumber for building the 1915 farmhouse. Nathan and his wife, Edith Windsor, was also an owner with his brother

Dale-Morin Home in its original location just north of Highway 147

Napoleon but they lived in Michigan. While they returned to the area and set up a coal and wood business, we have no record if they lived in the house.

In 1905, the Napoleon Foubert family moved to the Swain homestead south of Leonard, which later became the Coburn farm. Verna (Coburn) Cotton remembers Wilbert Foubert, Napoleon's son, driving the school bus to Navan. Rupert, another son, married Delia Laurin. Their eldest daughter, Blanche Beaudoin, remembers visiting the Cumberland farmhouse in Cumberland with her grandmother Ellen Swain Foubert in the early 1920s. There was a Foubert living there then but who?

Around 1925, Walter Earl Dunning, brother of Leslie who operated Dunning's Store, bought the Foubert farm. At that time, it extended south from the river to Arthur William's farm with land on both sides of the 5th Line after skirting Watson land in the village.

John and Mable (Magladry) Dale rented the farm from Earl Dunning from 1929 to 1944. The green shingled farmhouse was home to the Dales and their daughters Vera, Greta, Fern and Amy. Jack Dale farmed the land where the R.J. Kennedy Arena is today. His daughters took a daily trek across the train tracks, walking through the village and up the hill to bring home the cow for milking. The barn was west of the farmhouse on a hill overlooking the river. Passenger trains ran along the CN track just south of the house until 1936. Often men riding the rails would wander up to the verandah and Mrs. Dale would feed them with her great cooking.

In 1944 James Morin bought the farm from Earl Dunning while Jack Dale bought Hugh and Ella (Hayes) Camlin's house on Old Montreal Road. Even though it was almost within Cumberland Village, it was a still working farm. The Morins walked south across the abandoned CN line (now highway 417) and along a cow path to fetch the cows. They could go up to the pasture either by following the road east of Watson's garage or by going through the gully between Watson's house and the old hotel, and along the graveled 5th Line (now Dunning Road). By the mid 1950s, the gully had been filled in and the 5th Line extended to join Market Street to Old Montreal Road.

Fred Ferguson, their neighbour to the east, helped both Jack Dale and Jimmy Morin slaughter pigs in the fall. In winter, he helped with hauling ice from the river to the ice house, using teams of horses and sleds. Amy (Dale) Jones remembers that George Moffatt and 'old' Mr. Watson would come from Leonard on their sleighs to collect their ice but would always be given lunch at the Dale home before returning to Leonard.

During the 1940s and early 50s, the house was crowded with Morin children: Martin, Bernard, Dorothy, Leonard, Ronald, Bernadette, Grace, Mildred, Catherine, Robert and Joan. A central staircase rose from the three-roomed first floor to five bedrooms on the second floor. The tin ceilings on the first floor reflected sunlight that streamed in the large windows and retained heat from the wood stoves in the kitchen and dining room. A coal furnace in the basement kept the house cozy. With no indoor plumbing, water was drawn from the pump outside. The outhouse was attached to the wood shed. Oil lanterns provided light. While electricity had come to the village in 1932, no lines ran to the house until the early 1950s. Still, on Saturday evenings, the walls of the Morin house resonated with music and the clapboard floors rocked and rolled in rhythm with the dances. It was a lively house!

In 1954, Jimmy built a brick bungalow on the farm property where he, Nellie, Robert and Joan lived. Joan Morin Smith still lives there. The farmhouse was rented to a hired man for Angus Wilson, Mr. Van Den Broek and his family. The Villeneuve family were the last tenants in the farmhouse. Jim Morin sold lots from the farm and donated the land for St. Margaret Mary's Church. The Morins sold the farm house to Mr. St. Pierre who donated the house to the Museum in 1978.

The museum has today a building constructed by the Fouberts of wood. But it is a building that gave shelter to the Foubert, Dale and Morin families. It is these people, the families who lived there, who gave the building the heart and soul that turned it into a home.

The wood burning stove in the kitchen of the museum's Faubert House was once a treasure of Russell and Rita (Deavy) Findlay. Ethel Findlay cooked on the stove when she volunteered at the museum. Her husband, Allan, recalls that in 1929 his Uncle Russell had hitched a team of horses to a wagon and traveled to Carleton Place to pick up the stove.

Removal to the Cumberland Heritage Village Museum. (Bob McNarry collection)