

The Caboose

Newsletter of the Cumberland Township Historical Society
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LAST MEETING

Our last meeting was a public lecture held on Wednesday, November 1st, at 7:15 p.m. at the Cumberland Public Library on Tenth Line Road. The guest speaker was Jean-François Beaulieu, a Director of our Society, who described the results of his historical and archaeological research into the Wilson family mills from the 1860s through to the 1890s. Colour photographs were distributed, showing some of the artifacts found on the site. Jean-François described in fascinating detail the layout of the mills, steam engine and surrounding buildings, as well as the wharf and its construction, against the historical background of the Wilson family, the village and the township as a whole. The talk, together with the comments and questions of the participants, made this a memorable meeting.

NEXT MEETING

Our next meeting will be held on Wednesday, January 3, 2001, at 7:00 p.m., at the Cumberland Public Library on Tenth Line Road. The guest speaker will be Thérèse Messier, a retired teacher who has become interested in a creative method of preserving photographs of family and friends as a gift for future generations. This will be a general meeting, and everyone is welcome!

FEATURE ARTICLE

Some Early Recycling Activities: 1930 to 1950

by Elizabeth Alexander

When I was a child growing up in the thirties in Ottawa, a rag man with his horse and wagon would go slowly up our street calling out "R-A-A-G-S." The housewives would take their worn-out clothes, sheets, etc. out to him. During World War II, some recycling, specially of metals, was carried out. Now we are all encouraged to fill our blue boxes and black boxes, and to support other organizations involved in recycling larger items.

Isabel Russell, who for many years has been interested in preserving Cumberland historical items for future generations, was recently trying to find out more about two lovely woollen blankets which she and her sister, Bessie, had been given by their mother when they were setting up housekeeping on

their own in Ottawa. Their mother had told them that the blankets had been made from recycled woollens. Isabel and I started asking various older residents in Cumberland if they knew the story behind these blankets. We both soon found out that Kay Minogue was the "instigator" of a wool recycling project in Cumberland. I agreed to do further research, with Kay's help, and this is what I have found out so far.

In the 1940's, Kay Minogue saw an intriguing ad in one of the farm journals to which she and her husband, Ferg, subscribed. It stated that you could send your old woollen garments to a factory in Winnipeg, and that they would be recycled into lovely new blankets. Furthermore, if you sent the old woollens from several families, the company would pay the express charges, and the person who organized the collection would receive a free blanket. When I questioned Kay about this enterprise fifty-some years later, she could not remember (understandably!) exactly when and where she had seen the eye-catching ad, nor the name of the factory in Winnipeg.

After a fruitless search through microfilmed copies of 1946 farm journals in the National Library in Ottawa, early in the summer of 2000, I decided to write to the Culture, Heritage and Tourism Branch of the Legislative Library in Winnipeg. I was thrilled with the response which I received, three months later, from their Reference Librarian. She informed me: "We had a researcher in today who remembered ads for Fairfield [Woollens] and had the time to look in the *Free Press Weekly Prairie Farmer*. He was able to locate the ad, as well as one for Sask. Wool Products. We were very fortunate to have such a client, and we are pleased to be able to forward these copies to you for your research. The ads were in the March 26, 1947 and March 19, 1947 issues." I assume that similar ads appeared in the farm journal to which the Minogues subscribed at that time. (The National Library's collection of the *Farmer's Advocate* has many gaps in the 1940's and I have not gone back to check their microfilm records.) Kay remembered the Fairfield name when I showed her the ad, which reads in part: "Grand New Blankets from Old Woollens. Send us your old woollens, sweaters, sox, underwear, etc. We can make for you at very low cost new blankets, coloured bed throws, etc. We have completed our Government and UNRRA [United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration] work. Orders from our customers now receive our full time. Distance means nothing. Mail the coupon today [at the bottom of the ad] to Fairfield and Sons Ltd., St. James, Manitoba for our illustrated book." Kay no longer has the illustrated book, but she remembers that it described the "new" products, gave the prices (\$6 to \$8) and explained that seams and buttons had to be cut off the old woollen garments.

Kay enlisted the help of her husband, Ferg, and his old jeep, and collected old woollens from her neighbours. The parcels had to weigh 110 pounds each, in order to be shipped free to Winnipeg. She and Ferg took the bulky parcels (old gunny sacks jammed full and then sewn up) to the railway station at Navan, and off they went by Express to Winnipeg. She remembers that the late Mrs. Hector MacMillan, Mrs. W.H. Russell and Mrs. Jim McMillan were involved, also Rita Findlay and Gladys Sharkey who still have their blankets, as do Bessie and Isabel Russell and Kay herself.

OLD OBITUARIES

The following item was found in the microfilm version of *The Evening Journal* for Wednesday, November 13, 1895, page 8. Readers will note that after the death of his first wife, Mary Elizabeth McEvoy, Francis McNeely married Marguerite Elisabeth Lafontaine, in Rockland, on November 4, 1889.

CUMBERLAND NOTES

November 12 - After a brief illness of only three hours little Miss McNeely was called away to join the silent majority. The little girl was the only child of Mr. and Mrs. F. McNeely of this place. The remains were interred in the Rockland cemetery. Mr. and Mrs. McNeely have the sympathy of the community in their bereavement.

OLD NOTICES

Ottawa District Marriage Register

Reverend John Armstrong, Wesleyan Methodist

- William H. Chamberlin and Clareca Hoit, both of Cumberland, 4 January 1848; witnesses G. G. Dunning and Joseph Dunning
- Alpheus Dunning and Mary Dunning, both of Cumberland, 19 November 1849 in Cumberland; witnesses William Grier and James Williams

Reverend Henry Schaler, Wesleyan Methodist, Osgoode

- John Richardson and Jane Armstrong, both of Cumberland, 26 July 1849; witnesses Henry McAfee and William Armstrong
- William J. Ronan and Mary McCurdy, both of Cumberland, 1st April 1850; witnesses John McCurdy and William Shaw

[Source: *Ontario Register*, Lambertville, N.J., volume 8, 1990, pages 30-31]

EARLY PIONEERS

It would appear that in 1832, after the untimely death of Allan Wilson, a merchant in Stirling, Scotland, the decision was taken by his widow, Marion, to emigrate to Upper Canada, where she settled in Cumberland Township with her three children Marion, John D. and Alexander. All three children remained in the township.

Marion, born around 1819, married John Baikie, of Cumberland, on March 29, 1839. They lived in St. Leonards Ward (lot 24, concession 1), and had at least nine children. Marion died on February 12, 1908, in her 90th year, at Cumberland. She and John had been members of the Presbyterian Church in Cumberland.

John D., born around 1813, settled on lot D, concession 7. He and his wife Mary had at least nine children. They were members of the Presbyterian Church. John, a farmer, became the new town clerk in 1852 when Henry McAfee resigned. He was also appointed Librarian for the municipality in May 1857; in those days, the library was open from two to four in the afternoon on the first and third Fridays of each month. John remained clerk of the township until 1895, serving in that capacity for over 43 years.

Alexander, born on July 1, 1828, settled on lot 30, concession 1. When the 1861 Census was taken, he and his wife had three children: Sarah, John and Martha. They were members of the Free Church in Cumberland.

[The above profile was written by Bob Serré, using Census data (1861, 1901), newspaper notices from *The Evening Journal* (Ottawa), Township Council Minutes and By-Laws, and records of the Presbyterian Church in Cumberland.]

EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

As yet another year drifts into the past, it is comforting to note that our Society now has 55 members, and that its finances are stable and secure. We published our first book, *Navan of Yesteryear*, last July, and the author herself, Verna Cotton, has sold over 240 copies.

May the coming year bring us happiness and joy as we pursue our various interests in family and local history.

VIEUX REGISTRES

L'abbé Gustave Ébrard a desservi la Mission de Cumberland de septembre 1859 à mars 1861. Voici un extrait du registre de cette mission catholique [bobine de microfilm FHC-474 conservée au Family History Centre (Mormons) à Ottawa]

« Le premier avril mil huit cent soixante, nous Curé, soussigné, avons baptisé Paméla, née le vingt sept mars dernier du mariage légitime de Théophile Dessaint, cordonnier, et de Mathilda Damour, de la mission de Cumberland. Le parrain a été Guillaume Brayer dit St-Pierre, et la marraine Angèle Braseau qui n'ont pas signé. Le père présent a signé »

VISAGES DU PASSE

Alexandre, Isidore et Olivier Lavergne étaient tous trois des fils d'Alexandre Lavergne et de Charlotte-Louise Berthiaume, qui s'étaient mariés à Saint-Benoit dans le Bas-Canada en 1808. Le grand-père des trois frères Lavergne était Louis Lebuis dit Lavergne, petit-fils de Laurent Buy dit Lavergne, originaire du Périgord en France et soldat du régiment de Carignan, arrivé en Nouvelle-France en 1665 et marié à Denise Anthoine le 11 octobre 1670.

Alexandre, l'aîné des trois frères, est mentionné pour la première fois dans les rôles d'évaluation du canton de Cumberland en 1840; il habite alors la partie sud du lot 2 de la cinquième concession. Son frère Isidore occupera la partie nord de ce même lot.

Alexandre a épousé Marie-Julie Larocque le 3 novembre 1835 à Rigaud, et Isidore a épousé Rose Larocque le 12 novembre 1843 à Buckingham. Marie-Julie et Rose étaient toutes deux filles de François-Xavier Rocquebrune dit Larocque et de Véronique Foubert, qui s'étaient mariés à Rigaud le 16 octobre 1815. Véronique Foubert était la soeur d'Amable Foubert, le premier pionnier canadien-français du canton de Cumberland; Amable a attiré beaucoup de ses parents et amis vers Cumberland. Olivier Lavergne s'est marié le 30 juillet 1839 à Rigaud; il a épousé Rosalie Larocque, fille de Jean-Baptiste Larocque et de Rosalie Bénard.

Alexandre et Marie-Julie ont eu au moins onze enfants. Leur fils Alexandre, né en 1837, a épousé Henriette Millette le 18 juin 1860, et ils ont eu onze enfants. Isidore et Rose ont eu au moins huit enfants, et leur fille Hermeline a épousé Honoré Foubert, neveu d'Amable Foubert, pionnier de Cumberland. Olivier et Rosalie ont eu au moins neuf enfants, et leur fille Philomène a épousé Louis Dionne le 11 juin 1854 à Buckingham. Louis, fils de Louis Dionne et de Tharsile Branchaud, était cultivateur; il habitait le lot 19 de la cinquième concession; son beau-père, Olivier Lavergne, habitait le lot 18 de la même concession.

Ce ne sont là que quelques détails sur la branche de la famille Lavergne établie dans le canton de Cumberland; l'histoire des nombreux descendants des trois frères Lavergne pourrait à elle seule remplir les pages d'un gros livre.

Robert Serré

BONNE ET HEUREUSE ANNÉE!