

The Caboose

Newsletter of the Cumberland Township Historical Society
Bulletin de la Société historique du canton de Cumberland
Web site: <http://www.storm.ca/~jeanf/index.html>

Vol. XIV, No. 1
ISSN 1203-147X

July 2001

Published every two months

Editor: Bob Serré
1057 Riviera Dr., Ottawa ON K1K 0N7
Phone: (613) 749-0607

LAST MEETING

Our annual general meeting was held on Saturday afternoon, May 5, at the Public Library on Tenth Line Road, with 10 people in attendance. A new Council was elected for 2001-2002: Jean-Noël Dessaint, President; Jean-François Beaulieu, Vice-President (and Web Master); Ruth Parsons, Treasurer; Bob Serré, Secretary; Verna Cotton, Director; Carole Lafrance, Director; Bob Dessaint, Director.

NEXT MEETING

Our Society holds public meetings on the first Wednesday of September, November, January, and March, in the evening; the annual general meeting is usually held on the first Saturday in May, in the afternoon; there is no public meeting in July. The next issue of *The Caboose* will provide details about our September meeting.

FEATURE ARTICLE

They Called Themselves Anisnabek

by Bob Serré

When the French, the Dutch and the British laid claim to territories in North America in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the peoples they encountered had inhabited the land since time immemorial. In the Ottawa Valley, the French forged an alliance with the traditional inhabitants (whom they called "Algonquins") against a common foe (whom they called "Iroquois"). By the time a general truce had been achieved in 1701, the Iroquois had created havoc among the French settlements, and fought a devastating campaign against the Algonquins, who were pushed out of the Ottawa Valley, to which they later returned, but in greatly reduced numbers.

The traditional inhabitants of the Valley called themselves Anisnabek (meaning "True People"). Contrary to the Hurons and the Iroquois, theirs was a patriarchal society. They were well adapted to their pristine environment, and lived in small nomadic groups of hunters and gatherers with rudimentary agricultural skills. As the fur trade expanded westwards, the Anisnabek developed into able and shrewd partners in North America's most lucrative business, until they were reduced to

powerless pawns as a result of the fierce rivalry between the North West and Hudson Bay companies late in the eighteenth century.

By then, the French had lost Canada to the British, who maintained the ban imposed on settlement in the Ottawa Valley so as not to disturb the fur trade. However, when Americans loyal to the British Crown began seeking refuge in Canada as the American Revolution wore on, there was growing pressure to open up new lands in which the Loyalists could settle, and the Ottawa Valley raised a great deal of interest among the newcomers. The British authorities therefore reversed their policy concerning settlement in the Ottawa Valley, and much of present eastern Ontario was acquired from the native peoples in what became known as the Crawford Purchase of 1783.

In 1800, Philemon Wright led a group of pioneers from Massachusetts to their new land concessions at the Chaudière Falls (now Hull). This was the first serious attempt at settlement above the Long Sault Rapids (above Hawkesbury), and the remaining native peoples were much disturbed by it. They were accustomed to spending much of the year hunting throughout the Ottawa, Rideau and Gatineau valleys, and played an essential role in the fur trade, for no one knew the land and the animals better than they did.

The first two pioneering families of Cumberland Township were important players in the fur trade in the Lower Ottawa Valley. The Fouberts and the Dunnings operated as independents or petty traders, at least initially, competing against the powerful North West Company, which amalgamated with the Hudson Bay Company in 1821. As the fur trade dwindled in the Lower Ottawa Valley, the Dunnings and the Fouberts joined a new breed of entrepreneurs bent on tapping the tremendously abundant timber resources of the Valley.

Once again, the Anisnabek were pushed out of the Valley, as their means of sustenance disappeared. They did leave traces of their former presence (geographical names, oral traditions, folk medicine, knowledge of plants and animals and of canoeing and other outdoor skills). They also married into various families, principally of French origin, enriching the social fabric throughout their former lands, while they themselves all but disappeared, except in some areas of the Upper Ottawa and Upper Gatineau valleys.

Readers who would like to know more about the Anisnabek will find much of interest in Peter Hessel's *The Algonkin Tribe* (1987) and in books written in French by Bernard Assiniwi and Yvon H. Couture.

BACK IN 1888

On Tuesday, November 20, 1888, *The Evening Journal*, an Ottawa newspaper, carried a front-page news item about Canaan and Bearbrook in Cumberland Township. [Note: Initially, Vars was called Bearbrook Station]

Canaan

The roads are in a bad state at present owing to so much rain. Mr. William Cooper, one of our oldest farmers, set sail from Quebec last week for Ireland. His son is taking charge of the farm until he returns. Miss Ida Dawson, who has been absent for a few months, returned home last Thursday. Several cheese makers have attempted to start a cheese factory in this place. It is to be hoped that the farmers will consent to have one started next spring.

Bearbrook

Our little town is still growing and the rapid progress it has made during the last few months is astonishing. Mr. W.F. Campbell's fine new store is now completed and proves to be a very valuable addition to the other fine buildings around the station. His grainery alongside the Canada Atlantic

Railway track is in course of erection and when finished will fill a long felt want. Through the medium of our energetic and enterprising storekeeper, Mr. S.S. Cheeney, we now enjoy the privilege of a bi-daily mail. We are in need of a money order office here, and it would be well for those in charge of the postal department to make a note of this.

Through the generosity of John Kennedy, Esq., a free site for the erection of an Anglican church was gifted to the members here who immediately laid the foundation of what is to be known as St. Andrew's church. Donations of building material or pecuniary assistance will be gratefully received by the Rev. Morris Taylor, treasurer to the vestry and missionary in charge. Mr. J. McNeilly has purchased a lot for the erection of a shingle and planing mill with sash and door factory, which he hopes to have working by March next. Mr. George McLaurin, of Ottawa, intends locating here, having purchased from James Thompson two quarter acre lots on which to erect two dwelling houses and an office. William Shaw's handsome new brick residence is almost finished, the plastering and painting of the inside being left until next spring. Some of our young girls have gone into mourning owing to some of our boys having left for California.

EARLY PIONEERS

John McMillan was first assessed for the east half (100 acres) of lot 17, concession 1, in Cumberland Township, in 1843. Other assessment rolls give his name as John B. McMillan. He was born on July 12, 1779 in Scotland, the son of Duncan Donn MacMillan, married **Elizabeth Graham** (daughter of Thomas), and died on February 2, 1860 in Cumberland. John and Elizabeth had at least seven children: Thomas, Laughlan, Jennie (or Janet or Jessie), Buchanan, Elizabeth, John and Ewen. They were members of the Presbyterian church in Cumberland.

Their son **Laughlan McMillan** was born around 1817 in Glengarry County, Upper Canada, and married **Flora McPhee** on February 28, 1848 at Buckingham in Canada East; they had at least twelve children: Duncan, Angus, Sarah, John, Archie, Margaret, Janet, Isabella, Flora, Mary, Jeremiah and Elizabeth. According to the Township Council Minutes and By-Laws, Laughlan was a Pathmaster and Fence Viewer in St. David's Ward in 1862. He died on July 4, 1873 in Cumberland. His brother **Thomas McMillan** died on March 21, 1887.

Laughlan's son **Archibald (Archie) McMillan** was born in Cumberland on September 15, 1855, and married Anne Quigley around 1888 in Cumberland. Their son **James Carl (Jim) McMillan** took over the family farm, on which today's Camelot Golf Course is located. Jim was born on March 5, 1891 in Cumberland, and married Ellen Jane Somerville on June 10, 1915 in Cumberland; Jim died in Cumberland on April 27, 1967.

[The above profile was prepared by Bob Serré, with the help of family tree sheets prepared by Ruth Parsons and placed in the McMillan binder in our Local History Room at the Public Library on Tenth Line Road.]

EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

Our new President, Jean-Noël Dessaint, has just published his "memoirs" in a beautifully illustrated book entitled "Les sillons de ma vie." Dedicated to the author's wife, children and grandchildren, this 423-page account provides vivid details of life in and around Sarsfield and beyond, from the 1920s through the Depression years down to the present, in the candid French prose of a natural storyteller. Copies may be purchased by calling Germaine Dessaint at 835-2561.

VIEUX REGISTRES

Voici un extrait du registre de Notre-Dame-de-Bonsecours (Montebello). Cette paroisse a été la résidence du missionnaire de la vallée de l'Outaouais pendant de nombreuses années. L'abbé Paschal Brunet a été curé à Montebello de 1836 à 1838 [bobine de microfilm C-3023 aux Archives nationales du Canada].

« Ce vingt-quatre Mai, mil huit cent trente-six, après la publication de trois bans de mariage faite aux prônes de nos messes paroissiales [...] entre Hyacinthe Duplantie dit Belfin, domicilié à Cumberland, Haut-Canada, fils majeur de Théodore Duplantie dit Belfin et de Marie Anne Séguin du Township de Cumberland, d'une part; et Marguerite Roy, domiciliée dans le Township de Buckingham, ci-devant de Rigaud, fille mineure d'Athanase Roy et de Marie Cheffre de la paroisse de Rigaud, d'autre part; n'ayant découvert aucun empêchement au dit mariage, nous prêtre curé soussigné avons reçu le mutuel consentement de mariage des parties et leur avons donné la bénédiction nuptiale en présence de Léon Duplantie dit Belfin, frère de l'époux, de Joseph Ménard, beau-frère de l'épouse, de Louis Gauthier dit Landreville et de Venant Thauvette soussigné, les autres et les époux ayant déclaré ne savoir signer.

V. Thauvette

Paschal Brunet, Ptre »

VISAGES DU PASSE

Guillaume Brayer dit St-Pierre est arrivé dans le canton de Cumberland entre 1852 et 1854. Né dans le Bas-Canada vers 1821, il avait épousé Angèle Brazeau, fille de Toussaint Brazeau et d'Angélique Ouellet, le 31 janvier 1843 à l'église Saint-Clément de Beauharnois, au sud-ouest de Montréal.

Guillaume était le fils de Guillaume Brayer dit St-Pierre et de Marie-Anne Jamme, qui s'étaient mariés en 1820 à Sainte-Geneviève de Pierrefonds, dans la partie sud-ouest de l'île de Montréal. Guillaume père était l'arrière-petit-fils de Pierre Brayer dit St-Pierre, originaire de la paroisse Saint-Servan, diocèse de Saint-Malo en Bretagne (France). L'ancêtre Pierre avait épousé Françoise Thibault en 1739 à Pointe-Claire dans l'île de Montréal.

Guillaume et Angèle se sont établis sur une terre dans la quatrième concession, lot numéro 2, du canton de Cumberland. Lors du recensement de 1861, Guillaume était journalier, et la maisonnée comptait dix enfants; les six premiers nés dans le Bas-Canada. Angèle avait de la parenté dans le canton de Cumberland. Sa soeur, Priscille Brazeau, avait épousé Félix Daoust, fils de Joseph Daoust et d'Élisabeth Lalonde, à Beauharnois en 1841. Lors du recensement de 1861, Félix et Priscille avaient neuf enfants, tous nés dans le Bas-Canada, et la mère de Priscille, veuve, demeurait avec eux. Angèle avait aussi un frère dans le canton, André Brazeau, qui avait épousé Sophie Morin à Beauharnois en 1841. André et Sophie étaient arrivés dans le canton avant 1857. Leur fille Marceline a marié Alexandre Poirier de Cumberland, fils d'André Poirier et d'Archange Trudel, en 1863. Leur fils, Ozilbert Brazeau, a marié Marceline Lavergne de Cumberland, fille d'Isidore Lavergne et de Rose Larocque, en 1864.

Lorsque Théophile Dessaint, cordonnier à Cumberland, a fait baptiser sa fille Pamela le 1er avril 1860, c'est Guillaume St-Pierre qui a été le parrain et Angèle Brazeau la marraine. Lorsque Amable Foubert est mort à 80 ans en 1862, Guillaume St-Pierre a été l'un des trois témoins présents à l'enterrement, le 27 décembre, dans le village de Cumberland. Guillaume n'est pas resté longtemps dans le canton. Dès 1865, on trouve son nom dans le registre de la paroisse Saint-Paul d'Aylmer, et lors du recensement de 1871, c'est à Aylmer qu'on retrouve Guillaume, âgé de 50 ans, cultivateur, avec Angèle âgée de 45 ans, et huit de leurs enfants.

Robert Serré