

THE CABOOSE



NEWSLETTER OF THE CUMBERLAND TOWNSHIP HISTORICAL SOCIETY (CTHS)

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President's message (by Gérard Boyer)

It's amazing the reach that our Society can have over the Internet. As part of the group that are writing the early history of Cumberland Township to 1840, I've been in contact with the wife of a descendant of Walter Beckwith (Beckett's Creek) in Texas and an amateur genealogist from Maine on the same topic. Between us we now have a 90-page booklet on just the Beckwith family, whose legacy in Cumberland Township was shortlived except for the misspelled name of the creek. I'm now in communication with an Armstrong descendant living in Arizona or Utah and a Moffatt descendant in New Brunswick as we work through the Bearbrook historical information. It's a useful complement to the local information coming from our own

members and residents of the Township. By the way, we could use any information on the many Hicks' who were part of Bearbrook's early history. The names of William, Andrew, Isabella and Jane are part of the late 1830's story, but we're not sure how to link them all up. Happy New Year, everyone.

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 four times each year by the Cumberland Township Historical Society.

Our Executive

- Gérard Boyer, President
- Jean-François Beaulieu, Past President
- Tom McNeely, Vice-President
- Gilles Chartrand, Treasurer
- Verna Cotton, Director
- Ross Bradley, Director
- Ivan Tanner, Director
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- Randall Ash, Caboose production
- Dorothy-J. Smith, Caboose editor
- Karly Ali, Website.

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



Emily Cole (seated) was born in Essex, England in a farm labouring family. She and her Londoner husband, James Samuel Hawkins Sell, immigrated in 1884 to Cumberland Township (Canaan Road) along with their six children. While some of their descendants thought little of James Sell's aptitude for farming, they themselves did well in the new country. Standing is (left) granddaughter Elsie (Smyth) Hewens, (right) daughter Nellie (Sell) Smyth. Emily is holding great-grandson Eldon Robert Hewens. (photo from collection of Smith family) See inside for stories of three generations of immigrants.

Next meeting of the CTHS

The next meeting of the CTHS will take place on Wednesday, March 4th, 2015 in the 2nd floor boardroom of the Ottawa Regional Police Station, Tenth Line Road and St. Joseph Blvd. Gerry Boyer will speak on Cumberland Township land transaction records. Plan to arrive at **6:30 pm** as the meeting will begin at **7:00 pm**. Be sure to bring a friend along. Light refreshments, as always, will be served. **Please park on the street beside the police station (Eric Czapnik Way).**

Society calendar

For more information on these and other upcoming 2015/16 events, please contact a member of the executive committee or visit our website at www.cths.ca.



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|-------------------------|--|
| January 7 th | Cancelled |
| March 4 th | Gerry Boyer |
| May 6 th | AGM at Navan Curling Club. Jill Noakes, David Grattan and Fed Hyde will speak to us on their Navan time capsule project. |

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 is 7:00 pm.

At the Museum – 613-833-3059 / CumberlandMuseum@ottawa.ca

Contact the museum for costs and times

Special events in 2015 include "WinterFest" in February, "Heritage Power" in May, and in September a month of weekend activities celebrating the harvest.

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, you may contact any member of the executive by phone or by email:

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The Latest News... from Yesteryear

**From the Ottawa Semi-Weekly Journal
January 2, 1888**

"District Doings"

Navan

A very interesting and amusing entertainment was given here on Thursday evening by the pupils of the public school assisted by the ex-pupils, consisting of dialogues, tableaux, readings, etc., Mr. F.H. McCullough filling the chair both mentally and bodily, Miss Addie Hamilton and Miss Maggie Rathwell presiding at the organ with equally beautiful results, the entertainment closing with the presenting of a beautiful chain and charm to the retiring teacher, Mr. Cotton, who intends studying for a first-class certificate.

A few of the sports here got up a shooting match on Friday, the 23rd inst., and quite a crowd came to take part in the sport, of which there was plenty. A few of Bearbrook's crack shots came up to relieve the Navan boys of some of their surplus turkeys, but took home nothing but a lot of empty shells.

Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Monroe of St. Elmo are spending the holidays at Mr. James Hamilton's.

Mr. Andrew Hamilton, an old and respected citizen of this place, passed away on Friday 23rd inst., after a long illness, and was buried on Xmas day.

January 30, 1888

"District doings"

Cumberland

Three cases of typhoid fever have broken out in this village; one is serious, the others mild.

Mr. Wilson's grist mill resumed grinding on Thursday after eight days idleness, during which time a new engine has been put in.

Mr. John Shirkey (sic), tanner and pump maker, contemplates purchasing a boiler and engine to replace the horse power at present in use on his premises, in order to facilitate his businesses.



The Bush Settlers

by Dorothy J. Smith

Gerry Boyer is leading a team of CTHS members in researching the early settlement of Cumberland Township. Stay tuned for the book but here is a sample of the kind of information on early settlement which the team is unearthing.

In previous issues of the Caboose I have written on how many early settlers came to Cumberland Township after a few years in Glengarry County or on the more settled parts of Vaudreuil and West Hawkesbury. Henry McNally can be found paying taxes in 1846 on lot 22 in Concession 6 around the Bear Brook. But reading the memoirs of his father, the Reverend James McNally, shows that in fact the family acquired that land in 1825 shortly after their arrival in Canada when Henry was only six years old.

The McNally family came to Canada as part of a chain migration which started with the husband of James's sister, Ann McNally. Ann was married to a Captain McCann, a half-pay lieutenant who had settled in Riceville after being invalided out of the British Army with an injury from his service in India. His captaincy was as Captain of the militia in West Hawkesbury. Cyrus Thomas's history of Prescott County tells us that Captain John McCann came to West Hawkesbury about 1820 and was originally from Coot's Hill, County Cavan, Ireland. He and Ann had been married in Coot's Hill which suggests that the McNally family also came from there. As well other families had come out from County Cavan, and even from Coot's Hill, to settle in the Hawkesbury area.

James McNally came to Canada as a minister of the British Methodist Church and continued to preach as a circuit rider based out of Riceville. The family at the time of immigration consisted of his wife Hannah Jones and five children. They later had another four children born in Canada. The children who made the journey in 1825 were:

- Henry 1819 – 1882 (marr. Amelia Holmes in Cumberland)
- Jane (marr. Ira Bush Dunning of Longueil)
- Ann (marr. Gregory Dunning of West Hawkesbury)
- Mary (marr. Henry Vogan of Riceville)
- [perhaps John?]

James McNally states in his memoirs that he brought his family to Canada specifically at the suggestion of Captain McCann. The family left for Belfast on April 9, 1825. There they boarded a ship, the *Veronica*. According to contemporary record, the *Canadian Courant* May 21, 1825, (as cited in the on-line source "The Ships List"), there were a total of 134 settlers on board. It was a long passage of 34 days which indicates that the *Veronica* left Belfast on the 11th or 12th of April. Thus more than a month after they had left their home



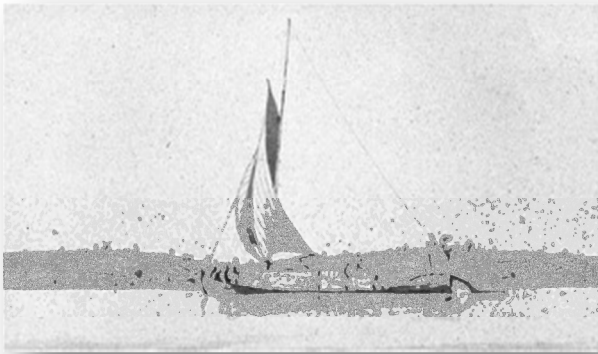
Oil painting of the brig *The Lady Nelson* circa 1820, artist unknown. The *Veronica* would have had the same two masts and square rigging.

they arrived at Quebec City. McNally recalled the date of arrival as May 15th. The ships list taken from the contemporary newspaper gives the date for the disembarkation of the "Brig" *Veronica* as May 16th.

McNally remembered paying \$2 per person to travel up the St. Lawrence to Montreal in a Durham Boat named the *Lady Sherbrooke*. Here McNally may be showing a confusion of memory reflecting the many years that had

passed between the event and his memoirs. In 1825, the Molson Company was running a steamship line between Quebec City and Montreal. One of their steamers was the *Lady Sherbrooke*. It left Quebec City for Montreal on May 18, 1825. The passenger list includes a James McNarry (sic) and family of six, three of whom were under age 12. That family travelled in steerage having paid £2/5 in total. (taken from Library and Archives Canada MG 28, III, 57 - Reel M-8276 vol 24).

A Durham boat, on the other hand, was a large open vessel—essentially a barge. But whichever way they travelled up river, steerage on a steamer or in a Durham boat towed up river, the children fell ill and three of the five were “dangerously ill.” The family stayed in



Early nineteenth drawing of a Durham boat on the Saint Lawrence

Montreal for six weeks fearing their daughter Jane would die. But eventually they hired a horse and cart to take them to Lachine where, because of the children's illness, no-one would allow them into a house.

Neither would the captain of the Ottawa River steamship, Captain Lighthall, allow them on board for the trip to Point Fortune. Instead they were towed in a Durham boat. The next morning McNally walked the 18 miles from Point Fortune to Captain McCann's [in Riceville – ed]. He arrived back with an ox-drawn cart only to find that six year old Henry had had to be rescued after falling into the river between the Durham boat and the steamboat. But in the end all were safe. They bundled themselves and their possessions into the cart and finally reached their family in Riceville.

The family persevered on through hardships. They spent at least their first two winters in Canada living in a shanty built by the sons of the McCann family while James's wife, Hannah McNally, took in laundry. At the same time, they looked to the future by acquiring a free land grant. In the fall of 1825 McNally acquired the lot in Cumberland on which Henry later settled. This was perhaps one of the last free grants as the government changed to *selling* crown land that year, with free grants given only under special circumstances.

James McNally recalled in his memoirs that he went with five or six others to Cumberland Township to do settlement duties on the lot. This group was the first settlers to leave the Township front, heading inland to the Bear Brook. McNally spent five to six weeks making the required improvements: a shanty, clearing the minimum two acres, and cutting out his portion of a road along the concession line. Then he went home to Riceville. But within twenty years, the son Henry came to Bearbrook to build a farm on the lot his father had claimed.

Postscript: There was at least one other Cumberland family who came from the same place as the McNally and McCann family. John Maglady (1825 – 1894) and his wife Beatrice Turner (1817 – 1896) both gave their birth place as [Coote] Hill, County Cavan, Ireland. Their son James was born in 1843 in Vankleek Hill.

Sources

Memoirs (1788-1869) of Rev. James McNally of West Hawkesbury, Ont., Minister of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Copy of another copy held in the Queen's University Archives, Kingston.

<http://www.theshipslist.com/>

Cassburn Tweedsmuir History, copy in Vankleek Hill Museum archives.

James Gilmore, "The St. Lawrence River Canals Vessel", presented to a meeting of the Society of Naval Architects and Marine Engineers, <http://www.maritimehistoryofthegreatlakes.ca/documents/Gilmore/default.asp?ID=s003>.



Immigrants on the Move

by Emmett Carr

As I was asked about my immigrant ancestors, here is the story I have. It started with James Carr who was born in 1800. He was 54 years old when he immigrated 1854 with his three sons, Tom, Bill and Mark, and his nephew Edward. James had been a contractor in Galway City working as a stone mason.

Their way was paid by an uncle who was Bishop of Galway. They headed for St. John, New Brunswick where there were other Carrs. I do not know if they were relations. They may have just come from the same place. But when James and his sons and nephew got to St. John they found there was no work there, so they left for this area. The family story is that they walked through the bush to Hawkesbury where the Hamilton Brothers were hiring. [By the 1850s the Hamilton Brothers' sawmill in Hawkesbury was the largest in Canada so coming this far to look for work made sense – ed.]

They pooled their money and brought out the rest of the family in 1855. Jim was married to a Mary Walsh or Welsh—I have seen both names. She had been married before and had a son from that marriage whose surname was Ryan but I have not found anything more about him. Mary was one of the few literate people in her generation and she maintained contact with the family back home by letter writing. Later she went blind—probably with cataracts—and could not write so contact was lost.

The children who came in 1855 with their mother were:

- John
- Nick (my grandfather)
- Bridget
- Mary
- Catherine.

That same summer of 1855, James took up 200 acres in Clarence Township. He had picked it out earlier. The land he chose was Lot 6 in Concession 10. They had to do the settlement duties to clear some land and build a house. They immediately built a rough log building with a dirt floor. They spent eight winters in that shanty.

My grandfather Nick later started to work in cutting squared timber. He got credit from Stephen Tucker who was in lumbering. Tucker had purchased cutting rights and had a sawmill in Montebello. He also had a store and a blacksmith shop at the Point in Clarence.

Nick's first raft of timber was tied together only with ropes and it broke in the rapids at Hawkesbury. So he lost all of that year's work and could not even pay his employees. But Tucker backed him for a second year. This time Nick tied together the timber raft with chains and augers. The family story is that he came back from selling the raft with \$3,000 dollars in a small trunk. He was able to pay his employees from both his first and his second year and pay back Stephen Tucker. Just as a point of comparison, the highest paid job at that time in Clarence was the judge who was paid \$2,000 plus another \$200 for travelling.

In 1876 Nick married my grandmother Anastasia Tessier. They moved into a *sumptuous* log house with a basement, a well, and a garden. It was also closer to the road that went to the village of Clarence and so was more convenient for getting supplies. Their children, my father and his brothers and sisters, went to school at Clarence #3 which was on the Colonial Road near Dawson's. Even though roads had been surveyed by the government, they were not cut out. Instead the roads followed the ridges to avoid the swamps. Vinette Road near our place went across a high outcropping of limestone. It was the first cut road and that was in 1904.

Nick's parents and his brother Bill who never married lived with Nick's family. My Aunt Kate, who was also my godmother, remembered doing errands and small chores at the house and hearing her grandmother Mary singing to the children in Gaelic.

Nick's brother Tom went out west building the railway. The third brother Mark married Bridget Brennan. She was the only child of Patrick Brennan and his wife Bridget Quinlivan. They ran a stopping place at Beckett's Creek [an inn for stopping overnight]. Mark's farm was lot 7 on Concession 1 on the Canaan Road. The concessions were small there, only 100 acres deep, so you could see Mark's place from Nick's house.

Mark and Bridgett had ten children, seven boys and three girls. In 1897 their eldest son, Bill, went out to the Yukon for the gold rush. He walked there via Edmonton and Jasper and in doing so came across a valley he thought had good land. He wrote home that if his brothers and sisters came out they could all claim free land. By pooling their grants, they would have enough acres to set up a decent ranch. That's what they did. By 1918, they had 800 head of beef cattle and were selling to the Hudson's Bay Company. They were also part of building up the town of Smithers which began as a coal and water stop in the Grand Trunk line.

Two of the brothers, Mike and Mark, were the cowboys. Jack became a trucker. Bill went on to become a contractor in Smithers. A few years back I looked up those relatives in Smithers and we have become friends.

The Farm Immigrants

by Dorothy J. Smith with Eileen Vaillancourt

At the beginning of the twentieth century the Canadian Government was keen to encourage two types of immigrants: single women to work as domestic servants and farm labouring families. Eileen Vaillancourt's immigrant grandparents were examples of the latter; hard-working British farm labourers whom the Dominion sought to work in Canada's agricultural industry. They were also part of a chain of immigrants from Norfolk, England.

James Cork (1 September 1860 – 6 December 1924) and his wife Maria Woodgett (26 September 1868 – 21 November 1936) were Norfolk natives. Maria had been born in Great Yarmouth, the daughter of William and Caroline Woodget. James had been born in Aylsham, Norfolk, the son of John Cork and Sophia Brown. They married in 1885 in Bringham, Norfolk and then raised a family of four:

- 3 sons (William James born 1886, George Henry born abt 1890, Arthur John born 1909) and
- 1 daughter Annie Maria Cork born 1896 (mother of Eileen).

James Cork, like his father and his grandfather, was an agricultural labourer. The

grandfather appears to have spent his life in Alby. The father, John, moved about a bit more. But the different place names found in the census records meant John moved in a circuit of about a dozen miles between his christening in Alby in 1822 and the two parishes in which he was enumerated as an adult, Aldborough and Aylsham.



The Cork family prior to emigration. Back left – right: James Cork, William, Maria (Woodgett) Cork. Front left – right: George, Annie Maria, [Maria's father William Woodgett?]

James moved from Aylsham to Stody, about eleven miles away, and then stayed put for nearly 30 years. Yet in 1911, when James was 51 years old and his wife Maria was 43, they and their children moved not to the next parish or even the next county, but to a new country. Eileen was told that they came because of good reports from the Bird family about working conditions on farms in Navan. The Birds were also agricultural labourers from Aylsham, Norfolk and there is a strong possibility (not proven) that they were cousins to the Corks.

The first to seek greener pastures were Leonard James Bird (abt. 1877 -) and his wife Nellie Pennock (abt. 1881 -). They travelled with their infant daughter, Marion Constance, from Liverpool to St. John, New Brunswick on the S.S. *Lake Erie* giving their ultimate destination as Ottawa. It is intriguing, however, that the young woman who was listed immediately before them in the ship's manifest, May Clarke, had "Vars, Ontario" overwritten on her destination of Ottawa. It seems unlikely that they had known



CP Steamship Line S.S. *Empress of Britain* from 1905

Miss Clark prior to embarkation for she had been born far away from Norfolk in Gloucester, England. And yet they ended up in the same Township.

Leonard's older brother John Bird (1875 - 1960) and his wife, Rebecca Jane Tice (1874-1972) also came in 1907. They left Liverpool on the S.S. *Lake Manitoba* on April 24, 1907, two days after Leonard and Nellie had reached St. John. They arrived in Quebec City on May 9, 1907 after two weeks of travelling with two young sons, Walter age 6 and George age 2. Both John and Leonard Bird gave their destination as Ottawa but I have not found a record on how or why they ended up in Navan.

Six years later in 1913, they were joined by a nephew, also called Leonard James Bird, who was the son of an older brother. Young Leonard was a teenager of 17 when he left Liverpool on the S.S. *Lake Manitoba*. He arrived in Quebec City on April 27, 1913 saying he was going to Navan, Ontario to work as a farm labourer although he had worked as a gardener in England. The nephew did not remain in Navan long but he did leave his name on the Navan Cenotaph. He enlisted in the CEF in 1915 and was dead in 1917.

The Corks came in between the first two Bird brothers and their teenage nephew. The family story records that James and Maria Cork's two oldest sons came first. This fits with the records and yet questions remain. On the night of April 2, 1911, the Cork household in Stody, Norfolk, consisted of James, and Maria, her widowed

father William Woodgett, and their two younger children, Annie Maria age 14 and Arthur age one. The second son, George Henry Cork, can be found in the Canadian (Navan) census in April 1911 working as a farm labourer for a widow, Mary Anderson. He was likely not far from the family of John and Rebecca Bird for the Anderson household is enumerated only four house entries after them. George stated that he had emigrated in 1910 and had worked in Canada for 12 weeks in that year. But I have not yet found George's passenger list to verify when and how he came nor have I found his post 1911 records.

Older brother William James may have immigrated at the same time as the Birds or with his parents and siblings. I have not found him in either the English or the Canadian 1911 census. His only passenger record is with his parents in 1911 and yet he claimed in the ship's manifest to have been in Canada at that time for four years; that is from about 1907. If this is correct, he must have returned to England to help his parents and the younger children emigrate. Yet this raises questions as William was a farm labourer in Canada and unlikely to have had a great deal of disposable income.

According to Canadian passenger lists, the CPR line steamer, *Empress of Britain* left Liverpool on September 22, 1911. Among the 953 third class passengers were James and Maria Cork, with their children, 24 year old "Wm. Jas", 15 year old Annie Maria, and 2 year old Arthur. The steamer arrived in Quebec City one week later at 8 a.m. on September 29th. As steerage passengers they had to undergo a medical and civil inspection before being admitted as immigrants. By 11:20 that morning the inspections were complete and we can assume the family gathered up their belongings to disembark. That evening at 7 p.m. they boarded one of the CPR "specials", or immigrant trains, to reach their final destination, the CP station in Navan.

Why did the Cork and Bird families emigrate after three and perhaps even more generations in Norfolk? I suggest they were leaving behind the hardship and lack of opportunity that was the lot of farm labourers in England at that time. What the Corks found in Canada was more farm labouring work but there was also opportunity here. James went to work for Sam

Dagg, William for Francis McCullough, and George mainly worked for John Boston Lowe in Bearbrook. Yet Annie Maria married into the local farming family of the McFaddens, something that would not have been imagined in England with its social and financial gap between farmers and agricultural workers.



Counting Cumberland

by Dorothy J. Smith

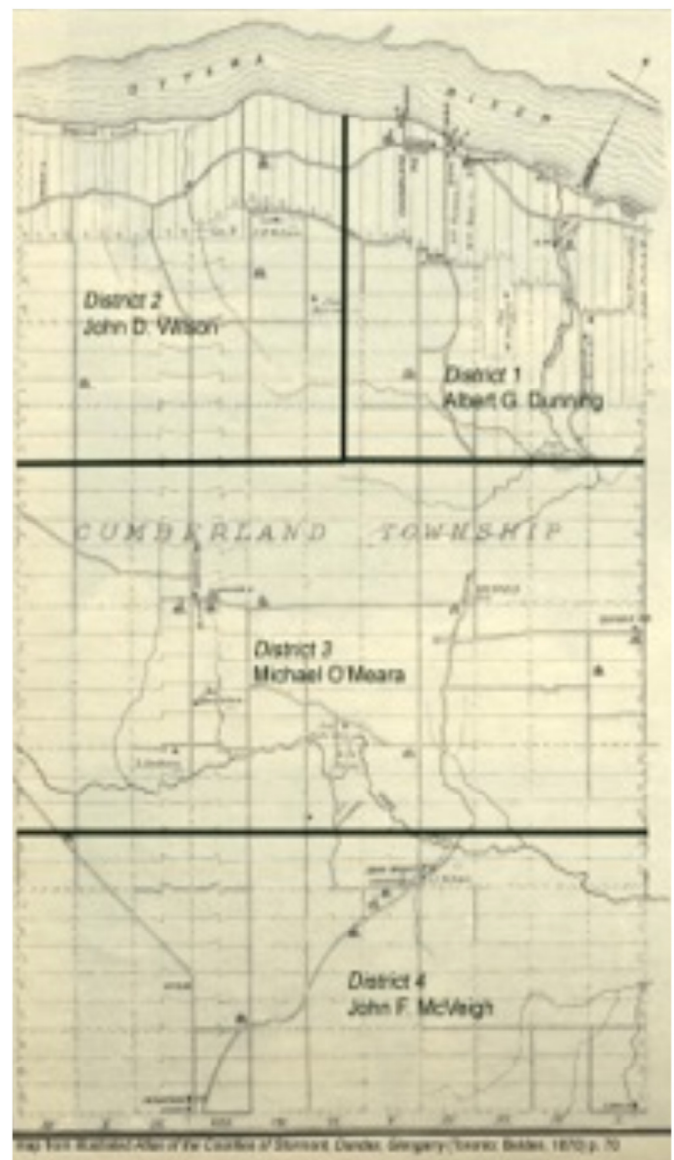
When Ross Bradley and Verna Cotton were building the case for honouring Michael O'Meara as a Navan founder, Gerry Boyer remarked that O'Meara had been a census enumerator in 1861 as well as postmaster. Michael O'Meara enumerated district 3 which took in the central part of the Township. The other Cumberland enumerators were A.G. Dunning for district 1 (the north east corner through Cumberland Village), John D. Wilson for district 2 (north west corner from the central commons to the boundary line and the river back to lots 5), and John F. McVeigh for district 4 (everything south of Lot 19).

So what do we know about the Cumberland enumerators of 1861? What were the qualifications for the job and what was the job like? Bruce Curtis, an historical sociologist, has written about the details of nineteenth-century Canadian census taking in *The Politics of Population* (University of Toronto Press, 2001). His purpose is to understand the development of the census as a tool of governmental power. But he shows how the pre-1871 censuses were badly conceived and badly managed. I was left sympathizing with the four men who took the census in Cumberland Township in the harsh winter storms of 1861.

The idea was to enumerate everyone where they stood on the night of January 13 to 14, 1861. Census forms were to be dropped off in every household prior to the date so the (male) head of household could fill in the names of all who slept under his roof that night. This was perhaps a feasible goal in England but the idea fell apart in the reality of

the Canadian colony. The governmental body responsible, the Board of Registration and Statistics, recognized that a one-night census would work only in the major cities—that is, in Quebec City, Montreal, Ottawa, and Toronto. For the countryside, the Board planned a four to five day blitz in which enumerators would spread out to count everyone found that week in each household. In the end, the census was not complete until sometime in March of 1861.

Patronage along with simple incompetence undermined the operation. The lucrative job represented by all those census forms had to be shared among printers. And so a portion of French language forms were printed in Toronto and then shipped back to Canada East



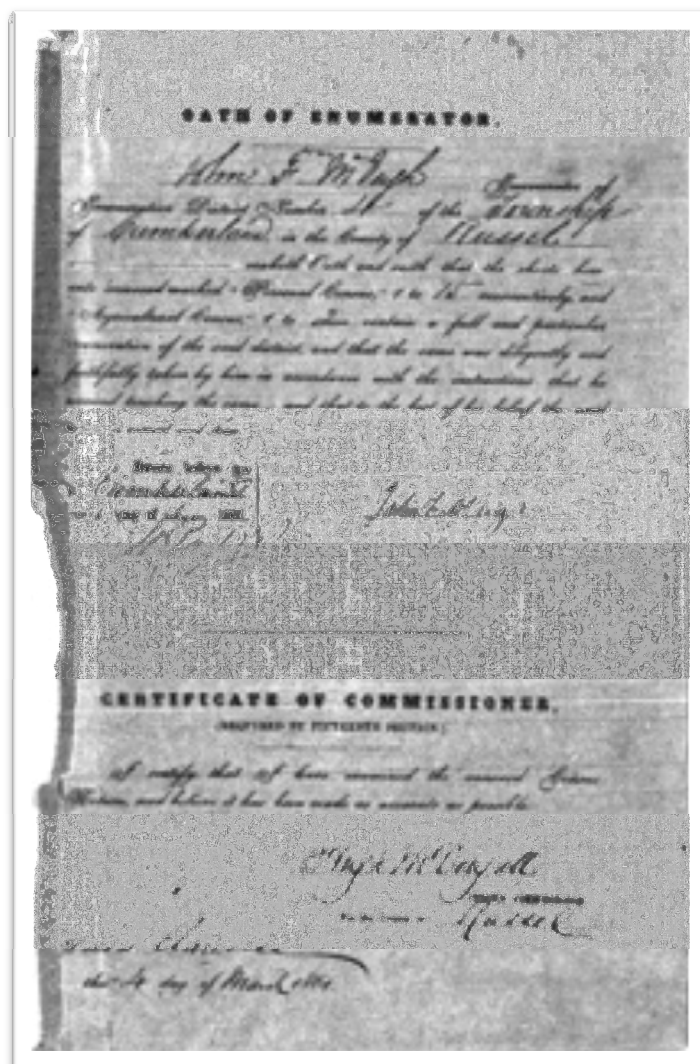
(Quebec) while a portion of English language forms were printed in Quebec City and shipped to Canada West (Ontario). The result was that many enumerators either did not get the forms in time or got them in the wrong language for local conditions.

In addition, the Board and the politicians involved in the process could not decide whether the census districts should be based on school sections or electoral districts. Finally at the end of November, a decision was taken. The census would count the population by county and municipality (cities, towns and incorporated villages).

On November 25th, 1860 the government started to inform the Census Commissioners that they had been selected to run the census. Given that the business of nineteenth-century Canadian politics was patronage, local MPPs had chosen these men. Then, with only six weeks to go, the commissioners had to find the actual enumerators and then train them and supply them with forms. They were also required to divide up their county or municipality into enumeration districts, often in the dark as to how to do so as the Board neglected to send them maps of their area of responsibility as it had promised.

Hugh McDougall was the Commissioner for Russell County. The only Hugh McDougall I found in the 1861 census in Russell County was a 26 year old farmer on lot 24 in concession 1 old survey in Clarence. However, he owned 150 acres next to the family of a 63 year old John McDougall. The elder McDougall owned 218 acres and included among his sons two men who were lumberers; that is, owners and not workers in the lumber industry. So even if Hugh himself may seem young for a patronage appointment, his family appears to have had the right amount of pull.

The Commissioners were told to select men who were literate, of good and temperate characters, and possessed of clear handwriting. In Canada East, the enumerators were more often than not notaries. In Canada West, they were most often farmers. In Cumberland Township, the enumerators all gave their occupation as farmer, although we know that Michael O'Meara was also the postmaster in Navan. (While I cannot find A.G. Dunning in the census, his initials are written too clearly to be a

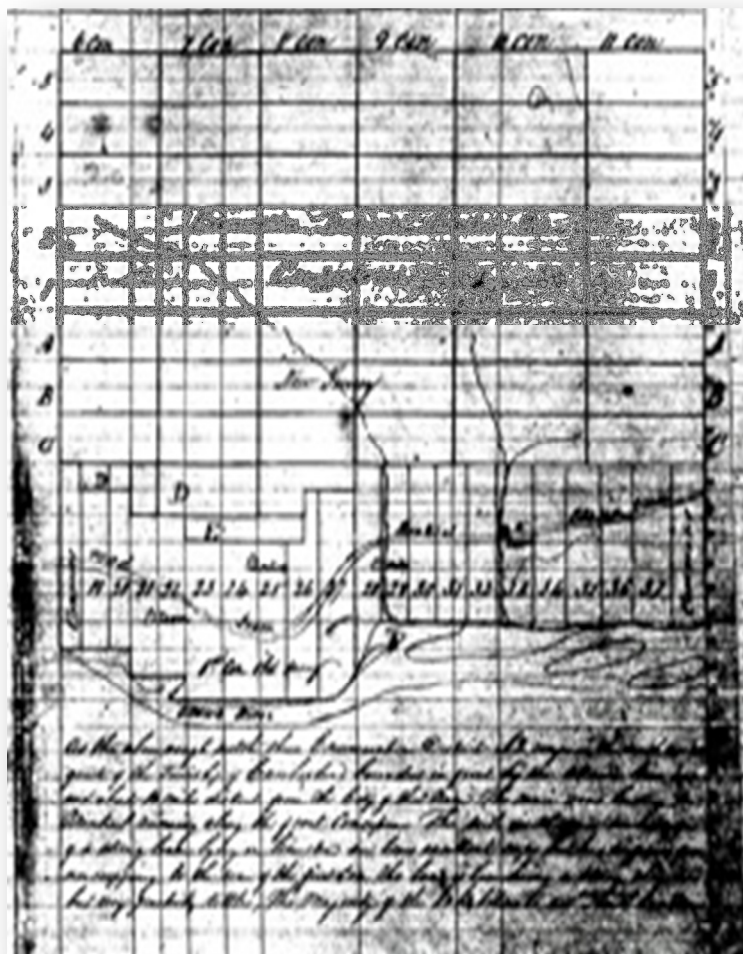


Even though John McVeigh was able to take his oath as an enumerator on January 6, 1861, the Commissioner Hugh McDougall wrote to the Board on January 23 that he was short of forms—well after the census was to have been completed.

mistake for one of the Dunnings who can be found).

Curtis quotes Hugh McDougall on the difficulties of finding enumerators. McDougall wrote to the Board on January 4th that some good candidates were away on business while others refused because of the low pay. Enumeration was not a plum job for it only paid 2 cents per name. In district 1, A.G. Dunning would have earned a grand total of \$12.20 for the 610 names he enumerated but he had to pay the magistrate 50 cents for administering the oath of office to him.

For anyone other than a labourer \$11.70 for a month or more of work was not a good wage. To neglect your own business in order to tramp around the countryside trying to extract information from people who saw you as kin to the tax assessor was unthinkable. What made it worse was that January 1861 experienced a wave of major snow storms which left most of the countryside impassable.



Enumerators were encouraged to draw maps of their district but most did not. In Cumberland Township, only John D. Wilson took the extra time to sketch district 2

An enumerator in Elizabethtown along the St. Lawrence reported trying to pass along a road with snow up to the horse's back. The cold was so severe that ink froze as temperatures ranged from minus 20 to minus 36 Fahrenheit. The enumerators were carrying loose sheets without protective covers as they rode through snow storms and had no board to write on when they

arrived. Since most assumed that only the male head of household could provide accurate information for the agricultural schedule, they would go to great lengths to track down the man. Then they had to write down information while standing in the barn or wherever they found the farmer. Even for the household information, enumerators reported having to write with the form spread out on the earth floor of a log house. As a result, some concessions were left uncounted and many census sheets were illegible even as they were handed in to the Commissioner.

There was an in-built problem, moreover, in the census plan. The Board wanted to capture a snapshot of where everyone was on January 13-14. But they also wanted to capture a picture of the male-led household. So they asked for the names of those individuals belonging to the household who were temporarily absent. Given the winter months were shanty months and also the time for visits (such as the one William and Ann (Cameron) Edwards of Clarence paid to her sister and brother-in-law in Ottawa on the night of January 13), there was inevitably double counting. This created post-census complications given the realities of Canadian politics. Both Canada East and West were determined to prove their population justified a greater share of power in the Canadian colony. The end result of the entire process was charges of fraud by everyone against everyone.

Michael O'Meara, A.G. Dunning,

John D. Wilson and John F. McVeigh must all be congratulated. We have information today on our ancestors because they chose to make a decent effort on a thankless job under difficult conditions.

