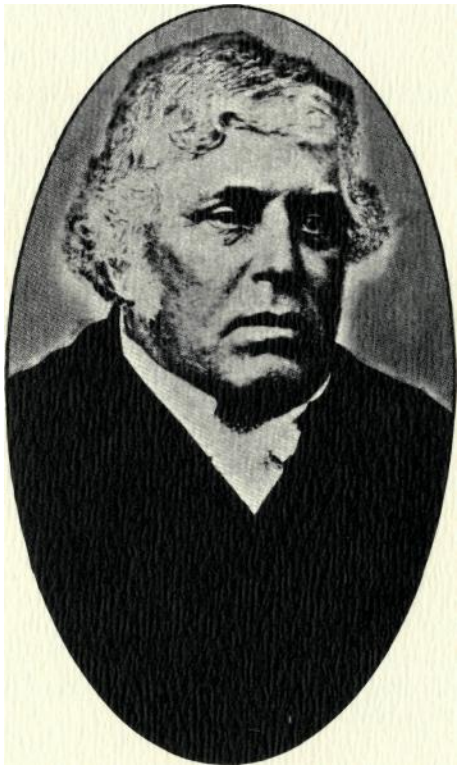
Wellington County History



REV. JOHN SMITHURST • BOOSTING ARTHUR • ART CARR'S COLLEGE
EARLY PLANNING IN FERGUS • WRITING ON WELLINGTON

VOLUME 1 • 1987

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The Wellington County Historical Research Society sponsors historical talks, house tours and other events through the year. The Society also issues a newsletter. Information regarding membership is available from the secretary.

WELLINGTON COUNTY HISTORY

Volume 1 **1987**

Front Cover: Rev. John Smithurst, as photographed by Thomas Connon in the early 1860's.

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The editors welcome for publication articles relating to all aspects of the history of Wellington County. Typed, double-spaced manuscripts are preferred. Editorial correspondence should be directed to the secretary.

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To Our Readers

The mandate of the Wellington County Historical Research Society is to promote study and research into our local communities and people. This new annual publication is intended to make available the best of current historical writing on our county to as wide an audience as possible. Wellington is a large county, and its history is a varied one. We propose to cover this history in all its aspects and periods.

Many of the prominent people of Wellington lived significant portions of their lives outside the county. The Rev. John Smithurst is well known as the rector of St. John's church in Elora in the 1850's. Less well known is his career as a missionary to the Red River Settlement. In our lead article, Eric Griffin examines the life of this fascinating gentleman, and concludes with the first serious examination of the celebrated Florence Nightingale legend.

In our second article, Pat Goldberg reports on her investigation of Arthur's boosters in the early years of this century. While other towns promoted growth at all costs during this period, it seems that Arthur and its newspaper editors valued what later generations would call 'the quality of life.'

It is an honour to have Art Carr, the dean of Ontario weekly editors, as a contributor to our first issue. Mr. Carr recalls the people he trained while proprietor of the *Palmerston Observer*, an institution we have termed 'Art Carr's College.' In the two remaining articles, Otto Bouwman places the early planning and development of Fergus in the context of town building in Scotland, and Steve Thorning offers a brief survey of historical writing on Wellington since 1866.

Our first number concludes with reviews of recent publications relating to Wellington County, and with Bonnie Callen's survey of recent additions to local archives. We intend to make this a regular feature of future issues as an aid to researchers and local historians.

Our purpose is to stimulate a greater understanding of the richness and variety of the heritage of this county. We invite you to discover, explore and enjoy our history.

The Life and Work of the Reverend John Smithurst 1807-1867

The Reverend Eric R. Griffin B.A., M.Div.

John Smithurst, Church of England priest, and missionary to both Rupert's Land and Upper Canada, died in Elora Ontario in 1867. His contributions to pioneer Canada were very significant, especially in education and settlement, as well as in the Christian ministry, yet he is chiefly remembered for his celebrated love affair with Florence Nightingale of nursing fame. This has been unfortunately over-emphasised, for the Rev. Mr. Smithurst should be memorable for himself and his contributions to pioneer Canada. Much of the literature available on Mr. Smithurst focuses almost entirely on his supposed unrequited love affair to the extent that it often reads more like a bad romantic novel than a true historical biography, and for this reason, little scholarly credence can be given to this literature.

This paper is an attempt to give as full an account as is possible of Mr. Smithurst's life and work, to give some insights into his character and his contribution to Canada, and to show something of the nature of pioneer Canada during the period of his ministry, *viz.* 1839-1867.

John Smithurst was born 9 September 1807 in the village of Lea near Matlock, Derbyshire, England,[1] the son of William and Christina Smithurst. They had at least two other children, for John mentions in his will his brothers George and Benjamin.[2]

John was self-educated, for there was no school in the vicinity of Lea until 1825 when one was built by Peter Arkwright. His theological training of 1836-39 shows that his early education was broad: besides courses in the Latin and Greek authors, Greek and Hebrew Grammar, and Biblical History, he took courses in Euclid, Trigonometry, Chemistry, Astronomy, English Composition, Geography, and Writing.[3] The *Dictionary of Canadian Biography* states,

> "Nothing is known of John Smithurst's childhood and youth."[4]

Smithurst was engaged in the hat-making business, and did well as a warehouseman.[5] He was employed in the firm founded by Sir Richard Arkwright in London,[6] and his obituary in the Church Chronicle states that he was employed in the counting-house.[7] Sir R. Arkwright was the inventor of a famous yarn spinning machine, so whether this hat-making firm was his, or whether Smithurst has had two potential careers before the ministry is unclear.

Smithurst was influenced by the evangelical church and by Wesleyan preachers (although he was later in conflict with the Wesleyans) and at an early age became clerk to Dethick chapel and Cromford Church, as well as being very interested in the Sunday School at Cromford. Boon holds that it was likely here that he met his lifelong friend, Ebenezer Hall.[8]

Why Smithurst decided to become a missionary is unclear. Boon maintains that he first felt the call in 1826, but was delayed as he was the sole supporter of his parents who died in 1830 (father) and 1833 (mother).[9] The romantic tales hold that since he and Florence Nightingale were forbidden to marry, he asked her what he was to do, and she told him to become a missionary to the Indians in North America. This second account is unlikely.

A. N. Thompson, a church historian, states that it is unknown how Smithurst came to the attention of the Church Missionary Society, because the CMS wrote to local clergy requesting candidate referrals, and it appears that Smithurst applied himself to the Society. There is, however, a letter dated 1836 from Smithurst's home vicar in Matlock,[10] the Rev. H. Arkwright, indicating therefore that Smithurst may have been led to apply. Despite his church involvement and enthusiasm, the letter states that he was

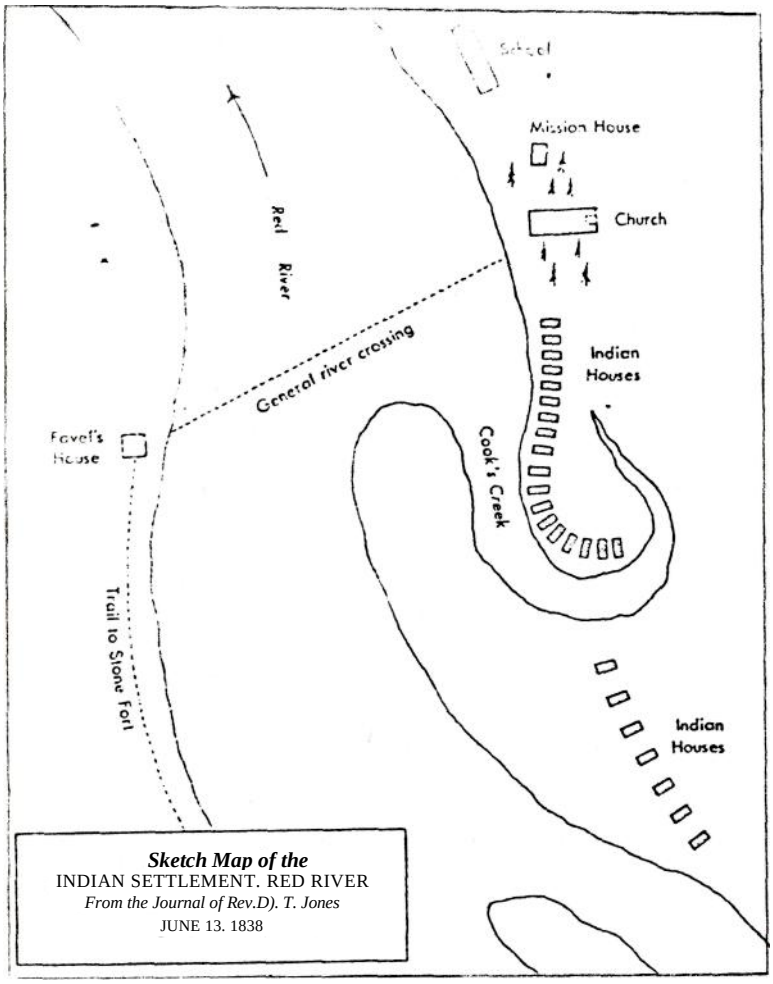
not known as a person of "very decided views" and that "he should not think himself qualified at present for Missionary employment."

The "Love Story" sources hold that Miss Nightingale's parents were involved with the CMS (Church Missionary Society), and since the CMS had received letters from the Red River Settlement Indians requesting another "praying master", she decided that John should be the one. This does not seem to be the case, for the RRS letters are dated 1838, two years after Smithurst's enrollment in the CMS school, and secondly, he was originally intended to go to the West Indies. Furthermore, when it was decided that Smithurst should go to the North-West America Mission, it was as a Hudson's Bay Company Chaplain and missionary to Cumberland House (the "Pas"), not the RRS (Red River Settlement). It would appear, therefore, that Florence Nightingale had nothing to do with Smithurst's decision to become a missionary, nor his being sent to the RRS Indians.

Undaunted by his unfavourable first report, Smithurst was interviewed by the rector of Bonsall, near Matlock, who sent a favourable report of him to the CMS, and on 2 May 1836 he was granted an interview. He was accepted with the view of becoming a catechist in the West Indies in the following year, and he expressed a willingness to be ordained if deemed eligible. He was enrolled in the CMS school at Islington (now part of the city of London) on 10 September 1836, as a probationary student. After his first year his principal reported that his conduct and proficiency were satisfactory, and he was made a regular student preparing for ordination. In October 1838, the fall of Smithurst's final year, the principal reported:

> Mr. Smithurst is not a man of shining talents, but of good sense, and much application — appears to be in his element among the poor and in schools — of decided piety, and likely to pass a respectable examination.[11]

Smithurst was accepted for ordination, and it was decided that he was well suited to the North America Mission in Rupert's Land, which was under the control of the HBC. He accepted this appointment and was ordained Deacon 23 December 1938 (Thompson; or 26 December, Boon) by



His Red River Stamping Ground:
Rev. John Smithurst spent a major portion of his career at this Red River Mission.

the Bishop of London, who had jurisdiction over the land of the HBC. Permission was asked of the HBC for Smithurst to proceed to Rupert's Land, but the Company would not admit him independently of their control. They wished to establish settlements and schools in other posts to prevent too great a concentration of Indians at one place, thereby drawing them from others such as York Factory and Rainy Lake. Thus, in February 1839 it was decided that Smithurst should go to the RRS (now Winnipeg) as an HBC chaplain as well as a CMS missionary, and in March decided that after an initial period at the RRS he should proceed to Cumberland House as a missionary and to open a school. In May he was informed of his appointment as HBC chaplain at the RRS, which was to commence 1 June 1839 at the salary of £100 per annum, and he was ordained priest by the Bishop of London 28 May 1839.

Smithurst sailed on the "Prince Rupert", and arrived at York Factory 15 August 1839, and at Lower Fort Garry RRS September 20. He did not remain, however, as an HBC chaplain and there are two explanations for this. In February 1840 Governor Simpson requested that Smithurst might be permanently located at the RRS, and that another missionary be sent to the Pas. This change was brought about by the Leith Bequest of £11,978 for the propagation of the "Christian Protestant Religion" being challenged by the Leith family. In February 1840 Smithurst was told that he would work for the CMS alone, his appointment as chaplain ending as of 1 June 1840.[12]

A different reason for Smithurst's displacement from the service of the HBC is given in his journal and the CMS *Proceedings.* Smithurst was to stay at Lower Fort Garry, seven miles north of the Indian Settlement, but the Indians had been told that he was coming to them, and had begun constructing a house for him at the Settlement. En route to Fort Garry, Smithurst learned of their desire to keep him with them, and together with his supervisor, the Rev. William Cochrane, he made application to the governor of the Fort for a release from his chaplain's duties, which was granted.

In 1838 the Indians had requested another missionary from the CMS to aid the over-worked Mr. Cochrane who had to tend four churches over 25 miles, half of which was

through swamp and woods. Upon their discovery of the CMS plans to send Smithurst to Cumberland House, they wrote again to the CMS and the following entry is found in the CMS *Proceedings* of 1839-40:

> **Anxiety of the Indians to have Missionaries**
>
> It was the original purpose of the Committee, that Mr. Smithurst should, after labouring for about a year at the Red River, proceed to the formation of the newly-projected Mission at Cumberland House, as stated in the last Report. Circumstances, over which the Committee have no control, have hindered the carrying that plan into effect. It is deeply affecting to read the remonstrances which were meanwhile made by the Indians at the Red River, who very naturally desired that the newly-arrived Missionary should remain fixed with them. They write as follows to the Committee, August 7, 1839: —
>
> Our Friends — When we asked you to send us a Praying-master, we did not expect you would order him to go to any other place, but to remain here with us; but we hear from Hudson's Bay Company Traders, that the Missionary you mention in your letter is going to Cumberland; but in your Letter, you tell us one Missionary is coming to us. We therefore intend to keep him here. We thank you for him; and we shall take particular care to do as he tells us, and pay particular care to what he shall say to us; and we shall also pay particular care to what you have said to us in your kind Letter, and shall pay great care to pray to the Great Master of Life: and we shall also pray for you all; and pray for us too. We find the Word of God good; and intend to follow it to the end of our lives.[13]

Smithurst's journal[14] supports this second explanation for his resignation from the HBC and his permanent re-location at the RRS Indian Settlement rather than the Pas.

> I declined acting on instructions given me in London. The Indians had been told in a letter that I was coming to them. So I told the Governor I must decline living at the Fort or taking the two Upper Churches (St. John's and Middle Church). I purposed fixing myself at the Indian Settlement. . . and should devote my undivided attention to the Indians, but had arranged with Mr. Cochrane that I would preach at Grand Rapids (St. Andrew's Church) every Sunday

> morning and that he should himself preach at the two Upper Churches. The consequence is I am no longer a Chaplain of the Hudson's Bay Company, but simply a missionary.
>
> Ambition might have been gratified by the title of Chaplain, worldly interest served by the salary attached to the office with a residence at the Fort, but conscience would not have been satisfied.[15]

The Red River Settlement

> . . . (A) colony (was) formed on the Red River in 1811 by Lord Selkirk, who invited persons from Europe (especially from Scotland), and from Canada, to settle on the spot, and which was gradually increased by the retired servants of the Company [i.e. the HBC] also taking up their abode there. The Canadians were French Roman Catholics and were occasionally visited by a Priest, but for the so-called Protestant portion of the Colony, no means of grace were provided.[16]

The RRS was a general region, not a specific location. The Indian Settlement was established at Netley Creek where it enters the Red River some 12 miles below Grand Rapids (St. Andrew's). In 1840 Isobel Findlayson recorded her trip to the RRS, and I quote from her journal:

> The colony of Red River extends about forty miles along the banks of the Red River, and about thirty miles along those of the river Assiniboia, which joins Red River at Fort Garry, forming altogether an extent of about seventy miles, over which the Settlement is spread.[17]

On 3 September 1820, the CMS, in cooperation with the HBC, sent the Rev. John West as a missionary to the RRS, who arrived 15 October 1820. In 1822 the RRS was adopted as one of the CMS stations, and in 1823 West built a small church. The CMS then sent the Rev. David Jones who arrived October 1823, as the permanent RRS missionary. In 1825, Jones became ill, and in October of that year the Rev. and Mrs. Cochrane arrived. Cochrane worked very hard over the years, building new churches and establishing schools, and the Indians, knowing of his over-worked position sent their request to the CMS for another missionary, who was to be, of course, John Smithurst.

When Smithurst arrived, his house was not finished, but he did not find this unacceptable after having slept in a tent for several weeks on his trip from York Factory to the Fort. In time his parsonage became a very beautiful place, mostly due to his great interest in gardening and horticulture:

> It may be noted that John had a famous garden people came to see, that he experimented in horticulture and introduced to Red River cucumbers, melons, kidney beans, and other novelties. Bishop Anderson wrote. . .: 'Mr. Smithurst has the best arranged house and garden in the Red River Settlement. He excells [sic] much in such plans and the whole aspect of the Mission Farm is most creditable to him.'[18]

Smithurst wrote to the CMS:

> My house offers every convenience, having on the ground floor entrance hall, dining-room, sitting-room, study and a small room which my head servant occupies and where he keeps the earthenware and glass. The two kitchens stand behind the house and are connected with it by a passage. There are cellars under the kitchens and under the dining-room, three rooms upstairs and a long room over the kitchen where we keep grain. I have two good Indian lads as servants (at £12 and £8 a year respectively) most attentive, steady and clever, both speaking English.[19]

Regarding his duties, he wrote to the CMS 15 November 1839:

> On the Lord's Day morning I preach at the Rapids; and I have Service here at three and six. I do not preach at the latter Service, but explain the Liturgy of our Church, in which the people take a great interest. The young people who have been taught in the School have most of them Prayer-Books; and, as they understand English, they make the responses very correctly. The singing is also very good. I have about twenty of the best singers for an hour or two in the week, to practice the tune for the coming Lord's Day. In the evening, for an hour and a half after the meeting in the Schoolroom, I have two of the Chiefs sons to instruct, with my own servants: they are very regular, and appear anxious to learn. I find great advantage to myself in having them; for as I am

> learning their language, they give me the pronunciation much better than my Instructor, who is an Englishman. The language which I have commenced is Salteaux, a dialect of the Chippeway: it is that spoken by the tribe to which Pigwys, the Chief, belongs.[20]

Smithurst performed the marriage of this Chief Pigwys (Peguis, Peguish, also known as William King) 7 October 1840.

He held the services in English, for the Indians had been taught some, and he was the first missionary to attempt to learn an Indian language. By 1842 he had translated Evening Prayer into the local language, and had begun the Wedding Service. He used the Roman alphabet in this work because he felt that the syllabic system of the Rev. James Evans was too imprecise. Smithurst admitted that the Indians found it easy to learn English, so he produced an English/Cree Dictionary. Evans' system was eventually adopted by the first bishop to Rupert's Land, Bishop David Anderson (consecrated 29 May 1849), and none of Smithurst's work was ever published.[21]

Smithurst laboured in the RRS for 12 years, performing 323 baptisms and increasing the roll of communicants at the Indian Settlement from 51 to 79. Many of the early names in the register are appended "admitted by myself due to the absence of a bishop. He did not take baptism lightly, and so came into conflict with Wesleyan missionaries and their work, as the following extract from a letter to the CMS, 2 August 1841 shows:

> Mr. Mason who is normally stationed at Rainy Lake, like the rest is continually on the move during the summer months. He came to Red River last week and is still staying at the Fort. He told me he had been away from Rainy Lake since the beginning of June and it will probably be Oct. before he gets back. I was a good deal surprised at one thing that he told me. He said during his tour this summer he had baptised 77 Indian children!! I expressed my astonishment that he should have baptised the children of heathen parents without their having had any previous instruction. He said that the parents promised that they should be instructed. But, I replied, how? Have you any immediate prospect of establishing schools at the various points where you baptised them? He said

> certainly none whatever. I then told him I conceived baptism as a matter of too great importance to be administered lightly and that to baptize all that came in his way was making the Indians nominal Xtians [sic] but leaving them still real heathens — I informed him that I never baptize the children of heathen parents without their being first instructed in the Mission School and being made fully to understand the nature of the baptismal engagement and able to answer satisfactorily as to their sincere desire to act according to that engagement. If the children are under 15 years of age I refuse to baptize them unless they have been adopted by Xtian Indians who engage to bring them up and see that they are sent to the Mission School for instruction. He said it was gratifying to him that the Indians should allow him to baptize their children for he thought it was a proof they themselves wished to become Xtian. In this he will in a majority of cases find himself grievously disappointed. The Indians never scruple to have their children baptized because they then think no one can injure them by conjouring. This notion arises from the Indian conjourers giving out that they have no power to injure the white men because they have been baptized by their priests. Now there is nothing the Indians so much dread as the power of their conjourers and they are therefore glad to [use?] everything that they imagine will afford them protection. They very naturally say if the priest putting water upon a white man will keep him from being injured by the conjourers why should not it do the same for the Red Man. Let us try the experiment. I sometimes find it difficult to get rid of Indians who apply for baptism under superstitious feeling. It appears to me that the Wesleyans think all that is necessary to convert the heathen is preach one or two sermons at a place and baptize their children."[22]

Smithurst in the same letter says that he regrets that he and the Wesleyans cannot cooperate due to these differences in doctrine.

Again in conflict with the Wesleyans, Smithurst was at the root of the "Colonial Ordination Controversy" in March and April 1842. Recorder Adam Thorn had written an essay which questioned the authority of the Bishop of Montreal in Rupert's Land, and Smithurst thought that he here saw

an attack on the privileges of the Church of England. In 1840 the HBC had admitted Wesleyan chaplains, and the evangelical Anglican clergy were concerned about themselves as members of the established church:

> He [Smithurst] had the temerity to inform the Governor and the Committee that if Thorn's thesis was correct and those whom the Bishop ordained were laid under civil disabilities, nevertheless they would be 'clergymen appointed by Apostolic authority' whereas the Wesleyan ministers were 'only lay teachers being possessed of no valid or legal ordination whatever'. Matters descended to a personal level between the missionary and the Recorder and in the end Smithurst was rebuked by both the Company and the Society for his share in it.[23]

In 1842 the CMS found itself in financial difficulties and the RRS was to be reduced and the outstations abandoned. Smithurst wrote to the CMS:

> If our friends at home but knew the anxiety your letter has caused, I am sure they would redouble their efforts to provide a remedy. Were the Indians averse to instruction, or did we see no fruit from our labours, we might relinquish our posts with less regret; but our churches are crowded, our schools are crowded, and the cry is (from the Crees more especially), 'Send us more teachers; give us the Word of God.'[24]

In 1843, the funding of the CMS was increased, and plans to close and reduce were dropped.

In 1848 again the CMS found that it was in difficulty, and Smithurst replied:

> Let us have faith in his promise 'Lo, I am with you always.' and let us hear nothing about 'contracting operations'. Enclosed you will find. . . £50 my donation to the General Fund of the Society.[26]

Life was not easy in the RRS. Typical journal entries of Smithurst's read:

> horse up to its knees in water so that it took three hours to travel fifteen miles.
>
> through storm and snow, my shoes freezing to the stirrups, my horse white with hoar frost and icicles of frozen breath hanging round its mouth.[26]

And in the summer there were plagues of mosquitoes.

The Indians suffered greatly from hunger during the winter months, and Smithurst helped to establish farming and the storage of buffalo meat, mutton, and beef. Again, from his journal:

> April 30, 1840 — We are now engaged on the farm ploughing and sowing. This kind of employment is certainly of a very secular character for a clergyman, but without it in this county, there would soon be a suspension of the spiritual part of his duties... I am so tired tonight I can scarcely move, and have found it no easy task to get through my usual evening service at the school-room, but as the Indians are never absent I feel a pleasure in meeting them after the labours of the day.[27]
>
> (1841)
> Sept. 1st — We now have securely stacked all our corn. It is estimated at 300 bush, of wheat, 200 bush, of barley, and 200 bush, of potatoes. With this, I trust I shall be able to provide for the schools and for the sick and needy.
>
> Oct. 12th — I have been engaged all day with people at work on the Mission Farm. I have now nearly thirty working for their winter clothing. They have cleared three additional acres this autumn. They are eager to do anything they see me do and endeavour to model their little farms after this. They have a willingness to learn both in temporal and spiritual things. How different from their original apathy and obstinacy![28]

By 1842 the work had grown so much that Smithurst required an assistant, as the mission work required more and more of his time, and he soon had a staff of five — his assistant missionary, a farm superintendent, and three schoolmasters. In this year he wrote a strong letter to the CMS regarding the necessity of a Bishop, stating that he had over 1000 people prepared for confirmation.[29]

Twice Smithurst was visited by Bishops. In September 1844 Bishop Mountain of Montreal visited the Indian Settlement, and highly approved of Smithurst's work, and from the four RRS churches the Bishop confirmed 846 candidates.

After he was consecrated in 1849, Bishop Anderson also visited the Indian Settlement, and was storm-stayed over Christmas Eve. He wrote in his journal:

> The ride from the Lower 'Fort to the Indian Church is the prettiest in the settlement, and the day was bright and beautiful, so that I saw it to advantage. The greater part of the way you drive through the woods, till you suddenly come on the river at a small island, where it widens and forms a large sheet of water almost like a lake, between the island and the Indian church. The flag was hoisted before the houses of Mr. Smithurst and the Chief Pigwys in honour of my arrival. In the afternoon I visited the Chief, and conversed with him for some time; and finding that his grandson was to be baptised the next day, I promised to do this myself. In the evening, according to good old English customs, Mr. Smithurst distributed meat and vegetables among the poor; every widow six pounds of beef and a quarter of a bushel of turnips. We then had service in the church, as it is always Mr. Smithurst's custom to have a short service on the evening before the administration of the Lord's Supper.
>
> The following morning the weather had changed, a very high wind, with a severe and drifting snow-storm; but we found no empty seats in the church, above 250 assembled to celebrate the birth of their Savior: and out of these, 86 joined together to commemorate His dying love at His holy table.[30]

Smithurst conducted two missionary journeys while at the RRS. The first was in 1842 to the Pas, to visit the native layman Henry Budd, who was later to be the first Canadian Native to be ordained, by Bishop Anderson 22 December 1850. Smithurst left the RRS 30 May and arrived at the Pas 25 June. There he baptized 87 people, including 38 adults, and married 13 couples. He left for home 29 June and having travelled day and night, arrived back at the RRS 7 July. His second journey was to Beaver Creek, which was under James Setee, in September 1843.

In 1846 a wing of the Sixth Royal Regiment of Foot, a detachment of Royal Engineers, and a detachment of artillery, under the command of Col. Crofton, arrived at Red River under secret orders from the War Office, and half of these men were quartered at Lower Fort Garry. They had no chaplain, so for two years, 1847-8, Smithurst voluntarily assumed the position.

> Someone later wrote to England about this fine work, and John was suitably rewarded by the government.[31]

Smithurst was officially appointed as a councillor of Assiniboia 12 October 1849,[32] but apparently had assumed the office the previous June.[33]

Also in 1849 he became involved in another controversy, viz. the "Free Trade Dispute":

> By supplying Governor William Caldwell with information favourable to the Company, he aroused the wrath of the Metis who succeeded in alienating the loyalties of a large section of his Indian flock. Smithurst's remaining two years were unhappy and in 1851 he resigned and returned to England. On 30th September, 1851 the Committee accepted Smithurst's resignation and his connection with the Society was dissolved.[34]

His health was another cause of his resignation.

> In March 1844 Smithurst was prostrated by a severe attack of rheumatism. For 18 days he was unable to leave his house. The attacks re-occurred at intervals. . .[35]

The CMS *Proceedings* 1851-52 no longer listed Smithurst as a missionary to North-West America. On p. 30 it is stated that he has returned home, leaving RRS June 4; and on p. 31 it is stated that he has "resigned from the service of the Society". No mention of any controversy concerning his resignation is found in this volume, although Thompson mentions a dispute with the CMS and Bishop Anderson over it.[36]

After his resignation from the CMS, Smithurst returned to Europe for a year, and finding the English climate ill-suited to him due to a bronchial condition,[37] he returned to Canada, as a missionary with the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, and was stationed in Elora, Ontario. He is listed in the SPG *Digest* from 1853 to 1857, when his name last appears on the list of missionaries, indicating his resignation. There is no mention of any further controversy.

Smithurst was now under the authority of Bishop Strachan of Toronto. He was for a very short time in Grantham Township, near St. Catharines, but soon was sent to Elora, arriving at the end of December 1852.

Anglican Ministry of Elora began in the 1830's, when the Rev. A. Palmer would occasionally come from Guelph, 15 miles to the south. In 1844 the Rev. J. Mockridge, "Resident missionary to Elora and parts adjacent", took over on a full time basis, and he was succeeded in 1846

by the Rev. D. Frazer, followed in 1849 by the Rev. John Marsh.

The Church of St. John the Evangelist was constructed between 1839 and 1842, under the direction of William Reynolds, Andrew Geddes, and David Gilkinson. It was located on Lot 1 Concession 1, Pilkington Township on land donated by William Reynolds, and was consecrated 24 September 1848. The lot is now wooded and is the site of *a* pioneer memorial. The present church was begun in 1873 and finished in 1877. Smithurst's parsonage still stands as *a* private residence, recently renovated, and in very good repair. The first Vestry was 24 April 1848, under Frazer. The rector of Elora was also responsible for Fergus, four miles away, and the two parishes were not formally separated until 1868.

There are few references to Smithurst's ministry in Elora in the local paper of the time. He must have had some organizational problems, however, for the following announcement appeared 1 September 1853:

> To avoid any possibility of mistake or disappointment, and to give the parties as little as possible, the Rev. Jno. Smithurst would deem it a favour if the members of the English church in the townships of Nichol and Pilkington would apply to HIMSELF PERSONALLY in all matters concerned with Baptism, Marriages and Burials, and be at the same time prepared to furnish all particulars necessary for the registration.[38]

Since the Church of St. James the Apostle, Fergus, was not built until 1858, Smithurst preached in the Fergus Temperance Hall on Sundays at 3:00, after his own 11:00 morning service in Elora. The first Wednesday of each month he kept free for baptisms in Elora.[39]

He continued his interest in gardening and was president of the Elora Horticultural Society, and after retiring, he was involved with the Minto Agricultural Society.[40]

His interest in education continued as well, and he preached on it at least once.[41] The first Grammar School in the district was founded in 1849, for boys, and later two Common Schools were started, one for boys and the other for girls. In 1854 Smithurst was one of the Elora County Grammar School Trustees,[42] and chaired this board which met in his parsonage[43] (whether regularly or only occasionally

is not indicated). He was instrumental in the building of a stone school-house and the formation of a public library. He regularly visited schools in the Elora area. A letter to the editor of the Elora *Backwoodsman* 17 March 1856 may give some insight into the nature of pioneer education and Smithurst's own ideas of how learning ought to be conducted:

> Sirs: I hope you will make room in a corner of your valuable journal for a succinct account of a public examination in school section No. 9, Pilkington on the 13th inst.
>
> . . .On entering the school, the first thing that struck me very forcibly was the excellent order and attention of the children. By their pleasant faces you could easily perceive that they felt the great importance of the day. Not only while sitting in their seats was this order visible, but also in the orderly way in which the different classes were formed.
>
> . . .The teacher, Mr. R. Godfrey, examined the different classes, when they showed themselves, but with very few exceptions, to be able to read with ease and expression, and answered promptly the very many questions put to them by their teacher with accuracy. After their teacher concluded questioning, the Rev. John Smithurst, Elora, asked several questions, which were answered quickly and correctly.
>
> The mental arithmatic class conducted itself with much credit, although the teacher informed us that it was only about ten days old. The proportion class, examined by Mr. Smithurst, showed itself to be well acquainted with the principles on which that rule depended.
>
> . . . I would just mention that Mr. Smithurst expressed himself highly pleased with the order and discipline of the school, contrasting it with others he had visited. In fact, the visitors felt greatly edified and delighted with the whole proceedings, and hope that Mr. Godfrey will be encouraged in prosecuting with even more perseverance (if that is possible) his good work.
>
> Your ob't Serv't E.M.

While Smithurst was in Elora, Minto Township was sold in 100 acre bush lots. Here, he acquired over several years control of 600 acres, 2-1/2 miles east of Clifford and 35 miles north of Elora. Lots 29 and 30, Concession 18,

were purchased by him at the initial land sale in Elora, 10 and 11 September 1854. In 1864 he added lots 27 and 28, and in partnership with Robert Caldwell, lots 29 and 30 on Concession 17. This was to be his retirement estate, which he called 'Lea Hurst'. He hired workers to clear the bush and construct the buildings, and by 1861 ninety acres had been cleared.

Smithurst retired from Elora (and the SPG) in 1857, for health reasons again, and was succeeded by the Rev. C. E. Thompson (1857-1878). One major reason for his retirement was the apparent loss of his voice as he was less able to preach.

> He never entirely gave up clerical duty, although he was physically unfit for any severe or continued work of this kind, being unable to read or speak with comfort to himself.[44]

Even though he had retired to his farm, he continued mission work in the vicinity. He held occasional services in Clifford, preaching in Brown's Hotel.

> For some time he held church services also at the log school house 1-1/4 miles south of Clifford on the Elora Road — at the crossroads called Dogtown. The first babies in Clifford were baptized by the Rev. Mr. Smithurst in Brown's Hotel Dining Room.[45]

Smithurst opened a post office located on lot 29 Concession 17, Minto, receiving mail from Clifford and Mount Forest; and opened a school on the same location, which became known as the town of Smithurst (after 1882 called Drew, Ontario). School Section No. 9 (Upper Drew) involved Smithurst:

> The first organized classes on the Upper 16th were held in a log house rented from John Smithurst and conducted by Mr. Main. . .[46]

There must be some details missing, for Smithurst did not own property on the 16th Concession. S.S. No. 9 did, however, cover some of his land, for it included lots 25-35 on Concessions 16, 17, and 18. In 1872 the school was relocated to lot 30, Concession 27, owned by Caldwell.

In 1859 Smithurst became the first Treasurer on record for the Minto Township Council, and he was also Pathmaster in his District. He was an outspoken supporter of the

Conservative Party in what was almost entirely "Clear Grit" territory.

The winters were difficult, and his frail health eventually forced his return to Elora. The *Elora Observer* of Friday August 30, 1867 notes:

> Our readers will be sorry to learn that the Rev. John Smithurst of "Lee Hirst" [sic] Minto is confined at St. John's parsonage, Elora, suffering from water on the heart. His recovery is extremely doubtful. . .

He died three days later.

According to his obituary in the Elora Observer, he had returned to Elora three weeks before his death, i.e. early August, seeking medical advice for an ailment from which he had been suffering for "several months". His *Church Chronicle* obituary states:

> In the Spring of this year, he caught a severe cold on a journey to Guelph; and from this he never thoroughly recovered. By it the disease of dropsy of the heart, to which he was constitutionally liable, was rapidly developed, and in the end of July he found it necessary to come to Elora for medical advice.[47]

In any case, he returned to Elora in the summer of 1867 and died there of a heart problem on 2 September 1867. Smithurst was so well-respected in Elora that the whole town was closed on the day of the funeral. He is buried in Elora, where his headstone reads:

> JOHN SMITHURST, Clerk in Holy Orders, Died Sept 2d, MDCCCLXVII, Aged 59 Yrs, 11 mos, 23 days. A native of Lea, Derbyshire England; 12 years Missionary to the Red River Settlement, Nearly six Years Incumbent of ELORA; afterwards Resident at Leahurst, Minto, and missionary to that Township. "I know whom I have believed."

Part of Smithurst's property was bought by William Turner in England who settled in Minto in 1872, and who also took over the Smithurst Post Office. Samuel Taylor in 1873 bought part of the estate on the 17th Concession.

Smithurst had two wills lodged with the HBC. The first one *(5* June 1851) had bequeathed his books to the CMS Institute in Islington, £50 to his servant Samuel Tate, and a

> life interest in the residue to his surviving brother, George, of Ashover, Derbyshire. At his death, £500 in 3% consols were bequeathed to the CMS and the remainder to his brother George and his late brother Benjamin.[48]

He made changes to his will in March 1852, perhaps due to his dispute with the CMS over his resignation, "but more likely they reflected his new found interests."[49] In the end, his books went to Trinity College, Toronto; the 3% consols went to the Bishop of Toronto in trust for the founding of a church, and the rest to the CMS, except for the famous "Nightingale" communion silver, which went to St. John's Church, Elora. There is no mention of his death in the CMS *Proceedings* of 1867, nor in the SPG *Digest.*

Smithurst was a plain man of great practical ability and common sense.

> On the other hand, Smithurst was inclined to be censorious. It must have been noticed during Islington days, for Secretary Jowett wrote to Smithurst March 6, 1840: A man, able to state the Truth learnedly, but doing it without love, will have little hold on his hearers. Angry Truth, in fact, drives men away. . .'[50]

He had a direct style of speech, unlike the eloquent, florid preachers of his time:

> He was a churchman who held to evangelical standards. In August 1845 he told the CMS that he differed with his colleague Cockran over the latter's "irregularities in the reading of the Liturgy" and he was unsympathetic to Presbyterian scruples among the Kildonian settlers. His Tractarian churchmanship worried the society because he taught the Indians how to establish the dates of movable feasts, so that those away on winter traplines could return for Easter communion, but he declared he attached 'no importance to ritual observance except as auxiliaries to devotion'[51]

John Smithurst was a hard-working, thoroughly orthodox, evangelical clergyman. He was unsophisticated, with a taste for politics, a passion for learning, and a love for the land and this country. His contributions, though not spectacular or dramatic, were nonetheless significant.

Obituaries

Death of Rev. J. Smithurst

In our last issue we announced the fact of the illness of the Rev. J. Smithurst, of Lea Hirst [sic] Minto, and our sad duty today is to record his decease, which occurred on Monday the 22nd [sic] at St. John's Parsonage, in Elora. The Rev. gentleman came here for the purpose of seeking medical advice, some three weeks ago, but his disease, from which he had been suffering for several months, grew so rapidly upon him that it was impossible for him to return to his home. His sufferings were borne with Christian fortitude, and his end was peace.

Mr. Smithurst was born at Lea, Derbyshire, England, on September the 9th, 1807, and would have completed his sixtieth year on Tuesday next. In early manhood his attention was given to mercantile pursuits, and he was engaged, for some time, in the service of the well-known firm founded by the late Sir Richard Arkwright. His tastes, however, were rather of a literary than commercial character, and he went thence to the mission at Islington, under the patronage of the Church Missionary Society. Shortly after his ordination, Mr. Smithurst was sent out by this Society to their mission at the Red River Settlement, in the Hudson's Bay territory. Here he laboured faithfully and well, during twelve of the best years of his life, as Superintendent of the Missionary Farm, and as Chaplain to Fort Garry. He was member of the Council, and acquired considerable influence in the affairs of the settlement, and when he returned to England his absence was regretted by all who had made his acquaintance. He had been earnest in his work, and administered with great acceptance amongst the people of that far-off region. He remained in England twelve months only, but found the climate ill-suited to his constitution, and that it aggravated a bronchial affection from which he was then suffering. Emigrating to Canada, he was appointed to the discharge of clerical duties in the Township of Grantham, Niagara District, but was afterward appointed to the mission of Elora and Peel, in which he continued for five years. At this time he was one of the most prominent and useful of our citizens, and, unlike many clergymen, did not stand aloof from the discharge of any public duty which he felt himself called

upon to perform. As Chairman of the Board of School Trustees, he did much to promote the cause of Education in our midst, and our Grammar School was never more flourishing than when under his supervision. To his efforts, combined with those of one or two other gentlemen yet living amongst us, we are indebted for our excellent public library, and the erection of the stone school-house on the north side of the river. He was a keen horticulturist, and acted as President of our Horticultural Society, and did much to create a taste in Elora for horticultural pursuits. He effected large improvements in the Parsonage, many of them at his own cost, and was highly valued as a pastor by the whole of his congregation. Failing health, however, compelled him to abandon his charge here, and he retired to Minto, to a large farm which he had there purchased, and which he speedily converted from a wilderness into one of the most flourishing clearings in the new settlement. During the last ten years of his life he resided there, performing such clerical duty as he felt competent for, and contributing largely to the improvement of that Township. For some years he acted as its Municipal Treasurer, and his business-like and methodical habits contributed much to the successful management of its financial affairs. He was a warm supporter of everything tending to the material as well as religious and intellectual improvement of the locality in which he resided. Although a Conservative in politics, and a consistent and honourable one, he was thoroughly Radical in his desire for the progress of Minto, and, when the question of gravel roads came before the people, was the warmest advocate of that liberal policy which has done so much for the improvement of the Township. The proposed Railroad had in him a warm and consistent friend, and its completion was one of the things to which he looked forward with confidence and hope. As a magistrate, Mr. Smithurst was known far and wide as a peacemaker, who would rather cement broken friendship and settle petty local differences, than permit litigation to spread and break up the harmony of his neighbourhood. In their little difficulties, the settlers found in him a judicious and honest advisor, and it will long before his place, in this particular, can be supplied by a better friend to those needing such assistance. He was closely connected with the Agricultural Society in Minto, and the annual dinner did not seem complete without his presence. We could enlarge upon his merits, but it is useless. Every reader in Minto knew him thoroughly, and will readily endorse all that we have said, and fill up many traits in his character which we have not space to record.

His funeral on Wednesday, was largely attended, and all the stores in the village were closed as a mark of respect. His remains were interred in the Elora Cemetery, in accordance with

his dying request, and will shortly be removed, we understand, into a portion of the ground likely to be purchased by the members of St. John's congregation here.

— *Elora Observer,* Sept. 6, 1867

— Died —

At St. John's Parsonage, Elora on Monday, September 2nd, the Reverend John Smithurst, Missionary in the Township of Minto.

The late Mr. Smithurst was born in the County of Derbyshire England, on the 9th of September, 1807, and consequently, had he lived another week, he would have been sixty years of age. In his early youth he was intended for a mercantile life, and passed some time in the counting-house of the celebrated firm founded by Sir Richard Arkwright. When his attention was turned to the clerical profession, Mr. Smithurst entered the missionary college at Islington under the patronage of the Church Missionary Society for Africa and the East, whence he was ordained Deacon and Priest, somewhat later in life than usual, and was appointed Missionary and Superintendent of the Mission Farm near Fort Garry, in the Red River Territory. Here he remained for about twelve years, ministering with great usefulness to both whites and Indians, and acquiring a considerable amount of influence in the affairs of the Territory and Colony. At the end of this time he returned to England, but finding the climate unsuitable, after a tour on the Continent of Europe, he came out to Canada. He was employed for a short time on temporary duty in the Niagara District, and in the Autumn of 1852, he was appointed to the mission of Elora and Peel, in the County of Wellington. At this post he ministered until the end of the year 1857, when his health, which had never been sufficiently good for the duties of such a mission, compelled him to retire to his property in the Township of Minto, where he passed the remainder of his life, improving, not merely his own estate, but contributing in a most marked degree, by his advice and example, to the advancement in moral and material welfare of that fine township. As a settler, as a magistrate, as a municipal officer, and as a clergyman, Mr. Smithurst's influence was most beneficial to those amongst whom he lived, and never entirely gave up clerical duty, although he was physically unfit for any severe continued work of this kind, being unable to read or speak with comfort to himself.

Mr. Smithurst was a man of clear common sense, and an acute observer. His knowledge of men and things was much above the average, and his conversational powers made him a welcome and interesting companion. As a preacher, without being what is now-a-days called eloquent, he was clear in his ideas, and knew how both to arrange them to the best advantage, and to clothe them in suitable language. His doctrinal views, as might be supposed, were rather of what is called the "low Church" type, but far removed from the rabid prejudice which at this time passes for Evangelicalism. He was a faithful son of the Church of England, and, in the lattitude allowed by his formularies, could see good in views of a different type from those which from early association had connected him. In political views, he was, of course, as every true Christian should be, a loyal Conservative, so far as he took part in election matters, his influence was always exerted in favour of the constitutional candidate.

Mr. Smithurst was never married, and, to a considerable extent his position, both in Bed River and in Minto, was one of intellectual and social isolation. In the spring of this year, he caught a severe cold on a journey to Guelph; and from this he never thoroughly recovered. By it the disease of dropsy of the heart, to which he was constitutionally liable, was rapidly developed, and in the end of July he found it necessary to come to Elora for medical advice. He remained there until his death, bearing with the greatest patience the discomfort and the sometimes severe pain incident to his disease. Though he hoped fo recover for some time, yet he unreservedly resigned himself to God's will, and frequently, and by word of mouth, and in his last will, expressed his sole dependence for salvation to be in the mercy of God, through the blood of Christ, shewn to an "unprofitable steward". His funeral was largely and respectably attended, all the places of business being closed on the occasion.

By his will Mr. Smithurst has made provision for a legacy of $500 to the Church Missionary Society for Africa and the East, and it is hoped that there will also be something secured for mission work in Minto. To the Library of Trinity College, Toronto, he has left his books in classics, Theology and Church History, and to St. John's Church, Elora, a handsome communion service, which he used when he was a Missionary at that place.

- *Church Chronicle*, Oct., 1867

REFERENCES

[1]*Elora Observer,* 6 Sept. 1967.

[2]Boon states that he was born in Crompton, near Matlock in Derbyshire, "the youngest of a large family, few of whom survived infancy". *(These Men Went Out,* Toronto, 1970. p. 10) I disagree with Boon about Smithurst's birthplace, for Thompson, the Elora obituary, and Smithurst's headstone all say Lea. Crompton was Smithurst's home church.

[3]Thompson. *The Church of England in Rupert's Land,* vol III, Cambridge: 1962, p. 502.

[4]Halpenny, F. G. (ed). *The Dictionary of Canadian Biography,* vol. 9. Toronto: 1962, p. 763.

[5]Boon, *op. cit.* p. 10.

[6]*Elora Observer,* 6 September 1867.

[7] *Church Chronicle,* October 1867, Toronto, p. 54-55.

[8]Boon, *op. cit.*

[9]*Ibid.*

[10]Thompson, *op. cit.* p. 502. Boon, *op. cit.*

[11]Thompson, *op. cit.* p. 502.
[12]*Ibid.* p. 505.

[13]Church Missionary Society, *Proceedings,* 1839-40. p. 112.

[14]The CMS required all of their missionaries to keep a regular journal as soon as they left England, a copy of which was to be sent to the CMS "as often as opportunity shall serve". Smithurst's journals and letters to the CMS are at present available on microfilm, and are yet unpublished.

[15]*The Beaver,* "The Lamp Shines in Red River", Sept 1939, p. 42. Boon, *The Anglican Church from the Bay to the Rockies.* Toronto: 1962. p. 47.

[16]Tucker, *The Rainbow in the North.* New York: 1852. p. 27.

[17] *The Beaver,* "The Journal of Isobel Findlayson". Dec. 1951. p. 36.

[18]*The Beaver,* "The Lamp Shines in Red River", Sept. 1939. p. 44. (Quotation from the journal of the Bishop of Rupert's Land.)

[19]CMS P*roceedings,* 1839-40. p. 112.

[20]*Ibid.* p. 113.

[21]Thompson, *op. cit.* p. 505. The author of "The Love Story of Florence Nightingale and John Smithurst" casually states that it was published, but Thompson is by far the better authority.

[22]Smithurst, *Letters and Journals* Toronto, microfilm, MT 78-13, reel 23.

[23]Thompson, *op. cit.* p. 506.

[24]Tucker, *op. cit.* p. 185.

[25]Thompson, *op. cit.* p. 504.

[26]*The Beaver,* "The Lamp Shines in Red River". Sept. 1936. p. 42.

[27]*Ibid. p.* 43.

[28]*Ibid.*

[29]*Ibid. p.* 44.

[30]Tucker, *op. cit. pp.* 264-265.

[31]*The Beaver,* Sept. 1936, p. 65.

[32]Oliver, *The Canadian North-West,* Ottawa: 1914. p. 354.

[33]Thompson, *op. cit. p.* 507.

[34]*Ibid.*

[35]*1bid.*

[36]*Ibid. p.* 508.

[37]Elora *Observer,* 6 September, 1867.

[38]Elora *Backwoodsman, 1* September, 1853.

[39]*Ibid.* 16 June, 1853.

[40]Elora *Observer,* 6 September, 1867.

[41]Elora *Backwoodsman,* 16 March, 1854.

[42]LePage, *School Days, p.* 1.

[43]Elora *Backwoodsman, 2* March 1854.

[44]*Church Chronicle, op. cit.*

[45]Taylor, *Historical Sketches of Clifford,* 1967. p. 23.

[46]Harrison, *The Way it Was,* Minto, 1978. p. 70.

[47]*Church Chronicle, op. cit.*

[48]Thompson, *op. cit. p.* 508.

[49]*Ibid.*

[50]*Ibid.*

[51]Halpenny, (ed). *The Dictionary of Canadian Biography,* vol. 9, p. 733.

A Further Note: The Love Affair with Florence Nightingale

John Smithurst was the recipient of a silver-plated communion service in 1852 or perhaps in early 1853. Whether it was brought to him while in Grantham, or in Elora, or even if he brought it with him from England is unclear. After his death it was bequeathed to the Parish of St. John the Evangelist in Elora, where it remains to this day, and for many years it has generally been thought to be a gift to Smithurst from Florence Nightingale. There may have been originally four pieces, but only three are extant: two chalices and a large pedestalled paten.

Briefly, the story is this: Smithurst and Nightingale were first cousins and they fell in love. Since Victorian standards forbade the marriage of cousins, they renounced their love and neither ever married. Tb break off the relationship, Florence's parents took her to the Continent to learn nursing, and Smithurst, having asked her what he was to do, was told to become a missionary to the Indians in Rupert's Land. After 12 years in the Red River Settlement he returned to England to try to convince her again to marry him, failed, and returned to Elora. As a token of her love, Florence gave John the silver communion set by the hand of Ebenezer Hall.

This story has been complicated by a strong, oral tradition in Elora that another first cousin of Florence's was also in love with her, and she sent him to what is now Wisconsin as a missionary, again sending to him another set of silver bearing the same inscription as that of Smithurst's.

There are many problems with this story. First of all, none of this is mentioned anywhere until long after Smithurst's death. There is nothing in Scripture, English Law, nor the Table of Kindred and Affinity in the Prayer Book which forbids the marriage of first cousins, nor, I suggest, would there be in Victorian moral standards.

I suggest that if indeed Smithurst and Nightingale were cousins, and if they were in fact in love, being cousins had nothing to do with their being forbidden to marry, but rather parental disapproval for some other reason, such as differing social classes.

Regarding Smithurst's sudden decision to become a missionary, I do not believe that Miss Nightingale had anything to do with it, as I have suggested in the main body of this paper. Perhaps due to his religious interests, he felt that he had a vocation to test, and since after 1833 he was no longer supporting his parents he was free to attempt the ministry; or perhaps, as his Elora obituary states, his interests were more "literary than mercantile". On the other hand it may well be that Smithurst was encouraged at some time by Florence to become a missionary and the story was exaggerated over time. I don't think that the reason can ever be fully known.

The author of "The Love Story of Florence Nightingale and John Smithurst," published originally in 1921, states that Smithurst himself told the whole love story, including the chapter about the other cousin, to a certain Mr. and Mrs. McCague of Salem Ont. while he was living in Minto, but this author is unreliable in other ways and must be viewed with caution. Nor does he cite his sources, except in very vague ways. He states that the following item appeared ". . . in a daily paper", without mentioning which one:

> FOX LAKE WIS. AUG 18 - The death of Florence Nightingale, 'The Angel of the Crimea', in London this week, recalls a very pretty romance, in which Fox Lake is indirectly interested.
>
> William Shore and Florence Nightingale were cousins and lovers in England in the long ago. English law forbids the marriage of cousins, so they pledged their troth and separated neither ever to marry.
>
> William Shore drifted to Fox Lake, and lived here many years, finally dying in 1868 and his remains are now resting in beautiful Wawshara Cemetary in this village. Florence Nightingale remained faithful to her vow."

If this is true, then it would seem to substantiate the local Elora tradition of the second lover/cousin and perhaps even the second set of silver.

The author of "The Love Story. . ." then goes on to examine the latin inscription on the base of the Elora paten, and states that it reads:

DONO DEBIT
HOC MUNUSCULUM
REVERENDO JOANNO SMITHURST
AMICO DELICTISSIMO
ALUMNUS EJUS
EBENEZER HALL
OFFICIORUM IN SE GRATE
MEMOR
AD MDCCCII

He is mistaken. The inscription actually reads:

DONO DEDIT
HOC MUNUSCULUM
REVERENDE IOANNI SMITHURST
AMICO DILECTISSIMO
ALUMNUS EJUS
EBENEZER HALL
OFFICIORUM IN SE GRATE MEMOR
AD MDCCCLII

The author then translates his version "very loosely" as:

> Acting as agent for someone, Ebenezer Hall gives this set of communion silver to John Smithurst, a very dear friend, in grateful memory of his many great kindnesses. AD 1852.

He is assuming of course, that this "someone" is Miss Nightingale.

I took the liberty of having two latin scholars from the University of Toronto, working independently of one another, translate the correct inscription without having seen the above translation. They offered as follows:

> "His pupil Ebenezer Hall gave this little gift/offering as a gift to the Reverend John Smithurst, a most choice friend, gratefully mindful of his kindnesses, in AD 1852."

> "Mindful of kindnesses to him, Ebenezer Hall, his student, gratefully gives as a gift this little gift to the Reverend John Smithurst, his beloved friend. AD 1852."

The latter translation is probably the most correct. Both scholars agreed that it was poor latin, and upon seeing the

first translation, both stated that there was absolutely no support for the translation "acting as agent for someone." Ebenezer Hall founded a firm in the Sheffield plating industry (which apparently still exists under another name), and became quite wealthy. It would seem, therefore, that a gift of a silver plated communion service to a missionary from a rich, old friend who owned a plating firm would be most appropriate. On these grounds I hold, tradition notwithstanding, that the "Nightingale Silver" is not from Nightingale at all, but from Hall himself. This would seem to discount the oral tradition of the second set of silver. This does not, however, eliminate the possibility that the silver may have been commissioned by Nightingale through Hall. Furthermore, there is supposed to be a letter, now in the Public Archives of Canada in Ottawa, from Miss Nightingale to Col. Clarke in Elora, in which her gift of the silver is mentioned. It may be there — I have not had the opportunity to look for it.

There is also supposed to be a letter from a Dr. Paget, who came to Elora in 1858. The author of "The Love Story. . ." mentions the letter, but does not state to whom it was written or where it is located, only that Dr. Paget wrote it after the death of Miss Nightingale in 1910:

> Jaris [sic] Street.
> August 17th 1910.
>
> I had the pleasure of knowing the late Reverend John Smithurst of Lee Hurst, Minto; a fine educated gentleman. He was engaged to the late Florence Nightingale. I attended him. with Dr. Clarke, of Guelph, during his last illness.

The author of "The Love Story. . ." will cite no sources beyond the following:

> Mrs. McCague gave an interview and the notes of that interview have been seen by 'The Sunday World'. Dr. Paget wrote a letter, and this paper has seen the document."

Even if these documents did exist, they only tell second hand that Smithurst *said* that he and Florence loved each other, and that he only made mention of the fact when he was a tired, ill, elderly man who had been away from home and family for almost half of his life. Regarding the love affair:

> . . . Florence Nightingale's biographer, Mrs. Woodham-Smith, declares that the facts do not substantiate the story.[52]

I can find no certain evidence to support any relationship between Smithurst and Nightingale. The love affair may have indeed occurred, but it cannot be substantiated, and if they were in love, the story has been greatly exaggerated. All accounts of it seem to be based on conjecture and poor evidence. I must bring down the Scottish verdict of "not proven" in this case. An exhaustive research attempt into this affair would require a rather extensive investigation of the life and family histories of Nightingale, Smithurst, and Shore; a trip to Fox Lake, Wisconsin to search out the newspaper item and the second set of silver; and a trip to the Public Archives in Ottawa; for none of which have I had the time, resources, nor opportunity.

— Eric Griffin

Editorial Booster Spirit in Arthur, 1900-1910

by Patricia McGoldrick Goldberg

The late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were marked by great degrees of urban growth in Canada. The building of bustling factories and the sprawling transportation system went hand-in-hand with expansion of many urban centres.

It was an era significant for its contribution to the developing Canadian economy and the ever-present market struggle of Canadian businessmen and manufacturers. Historical studies of this period have examined not only the business community and urban sector but the farmer in rural Canada as well, and their inter-relationships. Studies of the development of large cities and small communities have revealed the role played by boosterism — a phenomenon whereby the actions and ambitions of certain people manipulated urban resources and conditions towards growth. This article examines boosterism in the village of Arthur, particularly from the stance of the local newspaper editors — R. Thynne, H. E. By water, and Rixon Rafter during the decade 1900-1910. However, before proceeding to describe the booster efforts of these individuals, some background to this concept is provided.

To quote a Canadian historian, boosters, at a municipal level, were composed of "small, close-knit elites" with a commonality of heritage and possessed by a "belief in the desirability of growth and in the importance of material success."[1] Also, boosters have been described as "promoters who attempt to advance both their personal interest and

the growth of their community."[2] Whether individuals in this group belonged to municipal government, local business, or both, to them "good citizenship and boosting were synonymous."[3]

The Booster spirit in large centres has been studied by several Canadian historians. Perhaps, of greatest interest to this paper, focusing as it does on a small community, is E. J. Noble's study of Orillia.[4] Noble found that boosters and entrepreneurs played a key role in fostering rail and water power development in the smaller location of Orillia. In order to achieve their ambitions for personal and town growth, Orillia boosters sought government positions. As suggested earlier in the description of boosters, they also shared common characteristics: white, Anglo-Saxon background, of British or Ontario birth, and political party involvement at other levels of government. However, despite their preoccupation with growth and prosperity, Orillia boosters were tempered in their aspirations by *a* "degree of conservatism" as Noble wrote that

> While supporting growth they did not desire "unchecked expansion at any price." They believed that the community should proceed slowly but surely in order to prevent the rapid reversals which had hurt other communities, and that the private gain should be balanced by a consideration for the community as a whole.[5]

This tone of cautiousness characterized the booster spirit in Arthur between the years 1900 to 1910. As in many small towns, the local newspapers set the tone for the booster mentality which sought to further growth and progress. Through reading the *Arthur Enterprise and Wellington News* (also, The *Enterprise News),* it became clear that the editorial-reporting voice of the editors served as a consistent prompter and promoter of Arthur's growth, development and improvement. In short, the editors were a sign of booster spirit in a village which was not dominated by the type of adventurous entrepreneurs whose will prevailed in larger locations. In the first decade of this century, a leadership role was played by three successive newspaper editors in Arthur. Through their efforts, these men often proved to be the instigators rather than the reporters of policies and changes designed to spur growth and development in the village.

Arthur was incorporated as a village in 1872. The following description of the municipality is found in the Wellington County Directory, 1871-72:

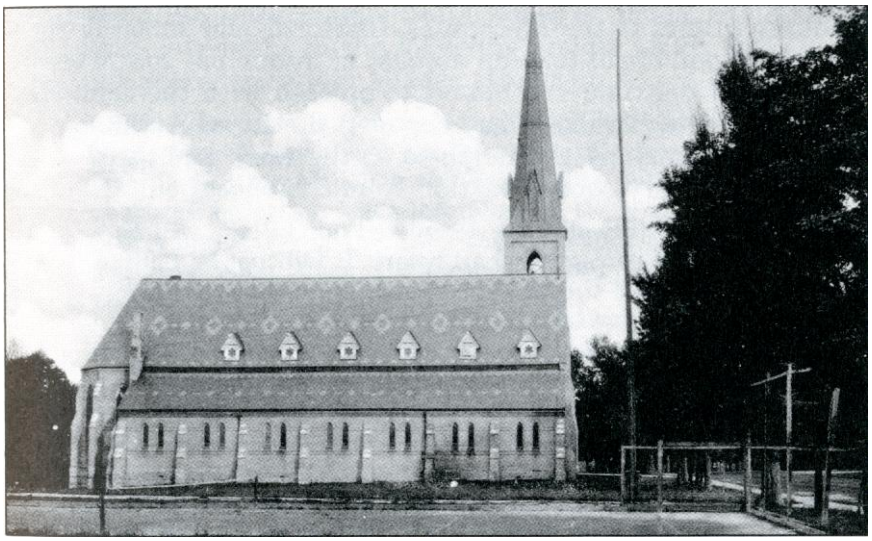
> A post village at the corner of the townships of Arthur, Peel, Luther and Garafraxa, situated on the main road from Guelph to Owen Sound, and on the Conestoga River. It is a station of the Toronto, Grey and Bruce Railway. It is situated in the centre of a rich and agricultural district, and contains several mills, stores, woollen factories, tanneries, andc. [sic] It has a Montreal telegraph office, daily mail, the Registry office for the north riding of the county, and population of about 900. Distant from Fergus twelve miles; and from Guelph 25 miles.[6]

The Conestoga River, with its strategic Mill Pond in the village, was a source of power for lumber, grain, and flour mills. As described in the 1908 *Souvenir* edition of the *Enterprise,* town businesses were well aware of the rural market exchange in their area: "The farmers are prosperous and the merchants of the place do as large a country trade as those of any place of its size in the Province."[7]

In this period, banks were opened; professionals set up legal, medical and veterinary practices; and, mercantile trade grew while the village prospered along with the rest of the country. By 1901, the population had grown to 1,285.[8] As Arthur grew, it maintained its position as a "central place" which, according to University of Guelph geographer F. A. Dahms, is "defined geographically as any settlement providing goods or services to people living outside its boundaries."[9] Throughout the decade, store advertisements and bank financing policies were oriented with an awareness to the surrounding market. Through the work of the news editors, one could discern the advertising, promotional efforts of the local entrepreneurs. Also, the editors themselves often spurred local activities through their words. Mindful of this preliminary background information, the discussion will proceed to examine the newspaper findings and the editorial record of these individuals.

In 1900, Rev. R. H. Thynne was editor of the *Arthur Enterprise and Wellington News.* A one-time minister, Thynne turned to the fourth estate with tones of idealism, morality, encouragement and competitiveness. His approach

Promoting the Town with Cement Sidewalks:
Arthur's boosters felt right up with the times with their new Main Street sidewalks in 1902.



Quality of Life:
This scene around Arthur's Catholic church shows the pastoral atmosphere its boosters wanted to preserve, rather than pursue growth for its own sake.

is illustrated in a New Year's address to the recently acclaimed council, consisting of business and professional representatives. For their benefit he wrote the following words:

> Our village has not yet reached a state of perfection, and although we have little hope that entire perfection will be reached, yet it should be the goal which we have set before us. There are many things that might be done for the improvement of the village. Among them we would mention granolithic pavement. We have no granolithic sidewalk in the town. Other villages less prosperous than Arthur, and less able, have a considerable portion of their sidewalks laid with this pavement, the advantages and permanency of which it is not necessary to point out. So much sidewalk might be made each year until the whole would be completed and our village would emulate in beauty and comfort the more pretentious towns and villages around us. We would not presume to dictate to that august body — our council — but we would stir up their pure minds by way of remembrance.[10]

Although the Council was concerned with such items as making grants to the Mechanics' Institute, and subscribing to *Municipal World* to keep abreast of municipal concerns, they found the time and money to proceed with the concrete (granolithic) sidewalks. They engaged the Royal Artificial Pavement Company of Guelph to do the work and thus earned a flowery commendation from their local editor.

> When the sidewalks are completed our village will be much more attractive than before. It will not be behind the times, and the whole surrounding country will be attracted to our town and business will be greatly increased. We owe a debt of gratitude to our council for the wise course they are pursuing, in improving and beautifying our town and thereby encouraging business of all kinds. *Vive le conseil!*[11]

Thynne's progressive outlook and concern for the village's well-being are evident on this occasion and on many others.

During the period of Thynne's editorship, weekly issues also reveal a great deal of information about the village's commerce. Advertisements from a variety of establishments are directed to townspeople as well as visitors and farmers in the surrounding district. For example, Brocklebank's

hardware invited racing fans to view his display of bicycles when they came to Arthur. The C.P.R. schedule announced four departures daily to north and south. The Traders Bank of Canada asserted that "ADVANCES made to responsible FARMERS", and livestock markets were quoted from North American centres.[12] Throughout the decade, merchants were keenly aware of the importance of farm trade whether it be for bank loans, mill products, or mercantile goods. The village "central place" was serving as a "district social centre."[13]

In the 1902-1903 papers, there are indications that the village is still growing, with lots being auctioned at a sale and a new street being built near the Commercial hotel after the Council received a generous grant of land. The transaction promised more business for the hotel owner and an adequate amount of concrete sidewalk nearby.[14]

Arthur's newspaper was acquired by new owners in 1903. Bywater and Hall were experienced journalists, the former having edited the *Meaford Monitor.*

Shortly after acquiring the *Enterprise,* H. E. Bywater began to make suggestions for progressive changes, including the establishment of a Board of Trade. His direct approach is evident in the following article which was centred appropriately to attract attention:

> The *Enterprise,* a few weeks ago, called the attention of the business public to the necessity of organizing a Board of Trade. Although the article met with general approval, no action has been taken in the matter. The future prosperity of the town demands that immediate action be taken, that is if we wish to promote the general business interests of the town.
>
> It is an accepted truth that "in unity there is strength" and assuredly it ought to be profitable for the business men to meet and discuss questions of vital importance, which effects the interests of all.
>
> For a business community to succeed there must be harmony existing. Questions pertaining to the future welfare of the town must be considered, and a fraternal spirit must exist among our business men if any progress is to be made.
>
> Let the apathy, so prevalent everywhere, be laid aside and let our business men, by organized effort, seek to introduce an era of progress. This can only be done

> through the formation of a Board of Trade. Who will take the initiative? Don't all speak at once.[15]

It is evident that Bywater was attempting to promote the interests of the village by stimulating the ambitions of local entrepreneurs who, unlike Noble's boosters in Orillia, were content to wait for business to come to them. This attitude will be discussed later.

As the new owner of the *Enterprise,* Bywater also began a campaign for a public waterworks system to which he had referred in a small article in February, 1903.[16] He obtained and published a written report of Parry Sound's successful waterworks venture. Bywater then proceeded to describe the "advantages" of such a system, as it would provide protection in case of fire; lower related insurance rates; and, last but not least, accrue profits for Arthur in installation charges.[17]

The new editor revealed his booster tendencies also in a lengthy article describing the excellence of local shopping facilities:

> It is hardly necessary to say that the stores of Arthur would be a credit in every respect to a much larger place. The merchants are enterprising and up-to-date, their stocks large and their prices so reasonable that every person in- the town and adjoining country can purchase at home to advantage.[18]

Not only does Bywater have the booster concern with growth but his "shop-at-home" concern is similar to that earlier-mentioned characteristic of booster "good citizenship". This is a recurrent theme echoed by *Enterprise* editors throughout the decade.

Bywater also supported the move to use the agricultural society's fairgrounds as a public park and encouraged the formation of a "Local Improvement Society;" thus, he argued that they would increase real estate value, and also, draw retired business people to the village as "the home of their old age."[19] The issue of urban beautification was considered in Arthur, admittedly on a minute scale as compared to Kitchener-Waterloo or Maissoneuve in Quebec, but with the aim of growth and development present in each case.[20]

In a fiery editorial in 1904, Bywater expressed the strength of his booster convictions by attacking the

recently-received Eaton catalogue. His words speak for themselves:

> Why should any Arthur citizen, speaking from a patriotic point of view, send out of town for anything required? There isn't a single man, woman or child in the place that isn't dependent on the rest for a living, and in order to be fair to them and to ourselves we should do unto others as we would have done by. We can't have business men if we don't support them. . .
>
> It isn't a very long time since Canadian manufacturers found it necessary to label their goods "made in Germany" or "made in the United States" in order to get purchasers even in Canada, but owing to the growth of Canadian patriotism and the good opinion our manufacturers have gained in the world's markets, it now pays better to use the correct motto "made in Canada."
>
> It should be the same when applied to Arthur. There is no reason why we should not have in a very few years as good an inland town as Ontario boasts, but we will have to be loyal to the limit.[21]

Bywater's concerns were not unfounded as, according to Dahms, the arrival of catalogues from the major departmental stores in Toronto actually threatened the existence of many "general stores" in the Guelph-Wellington County area.[22]

As editor of the local newspaper, Bywater published other people's ideas and booster schemes as well as his own. For example, in July of 1904, he published a letter from a certain James Douglass who suggested the wisdom of establishing a natural gas business in Arthur. This was followed by interested responses in subsequent issues, but enthusiasm soon dwindled.[23]

Subscriptions to the newspaper also were encouraged as he wrote in promoter-like fashion to the villagers: "Our aim is, not to capture the earth, but to boost this old town and help the agricultural district surrounding it."[24] The booster spirit was clearly an integral part of Bywater's editorial policy.

Accordingly, Bywater continued to campaign for the formation of a Board of Trade "to look out. . .for business chances for the town." Also, he preferred the use of "private money" to encourage growth as opposed to granting

bonuses which was often the policy of boosters in centres such as Orillia and Winnipeg. Bywater expressed the above opinions in an issue which also revealed his reservations about "the bonus craze":

> There are many towns in Ontario that are giving large bonuses for the establishment of business enterprises of various kinds. The companies that seek for bonuses are legion, and as there is a keen competition between towns and an anxiety to grow and advance in these days of expansion in Canada, the bonus seekers often succeed in their search for victims. The result is large debenture debts, heavy taxation and in many cases unsatisfactory business results. The trade is diverted from its proper channels, industries established where nature never intended they should be and often managed in a way that no one would tolerate in his own business.[25]

Only in very sure instances would he favour bonusing.

Not only did Bywater promote a Board of Trade, he censured certain merchants for their passivity and lack of effort to promote business in Arthur. Bywater referred to these merchants as "business sponges" who

> merely wait for their associates to induce people to come to town, and content themselves with what trade drifts to them. This is manifestly unfair and unjust, and no whole-souled, public-spirited business men will do it. If you want trade ask for it.[26]

Bywater's words commended the many successful merchants who did employ the advertising services of the newspaper. However, with his rather pointed editorial, Bywater endeavoured to stir others to strive to attract their own share of the local Arthur and area trade.

In a similarly strident manner, Bywater supported cooperation with the Huron and Ontario Railway Company's move to build a line from Orangeville to Grand Valley to Arthur in 1907. Contrary to his expressed dislike of bonuses, he acted in favour of following the examples of Orangeville and Grand Valley with offers of money from the Council. As an incentive to reluctant supporters, he used new information to change their minds.

> Returns of the Assessor show a slight decrease in population. A little activity and enterprise displayed by

> our citizens, whether engaged in mercantile or manufacturing and a hearty co-operation on the part of our many men of means who have retired from the more active pursuits of life will term the tide in the other direction. We have as good natural advantages as many of the smaller cities in the province. Let us utilize it to the fullest extent, and in two years time Arthur will no longer be a thriving hamlet, but will be classed among the leading towns of the province.[27]

However, this issue was not pursued by all parties.

At this time, Bywater's paper also concerned itself with smaller issues. The newspaper published articles on a variety of topics relating to economics, social events, and sports. Issues ranged from spring trade in stores and disputes over a "cigarette by-law" to festivities on July 12 and ecumenical celebrations to honour the local parish priest.[28]

As 1907 drew to a close, Bywater and the Council agreed to pursue a suggestion to hold an "Old Boys Reunion" in 1908. According to the Town Clerk, it would involve a great deal of "Work, Worry and Dough" to hold a successful reunion but they were certain that it would be worth the effort.[29] An invitation was circulated and, as well, the contents were reproduced in the Arthur newspaper.

Attempting to contribute to the reunion's success, and with his usual enthusiasm, editor Bywater amassed a selection of historical photos, articles and character sketches of leading citizens in a special *Souvenir* edition of the 1908 newspaper. Published in the month of the reunion, this issue was filled with descriptions of the Town Fathers, accounts of early settlement in the area townships, and subtle, but significant, notices to prospective manufacturers and developers. One such item was directed "To Manufacturers":

> The question of location is an all-important one for industries of every kind. Not the overflowing centre or the out-of-the-way corner, but the thrifty little town easy of access is the place for a certain line of small manufacture. Such a town is Arthur. If anyone is looking for a place to locate, kindly correspond with Mayor Colwill.[30]

Further inducements to developers were listed under captions such as the following: "Arthur a Religious Town";

"Well Located"; "Great Natural Wealth"; and, "An Agricultural Centre".[31] By water also wrote of the good work done by the Retail Merchants' Association and the "Progressive Town Council."[32]

In the *Souvenir* edition, the merchants' successful, enterprising natures are outlined along with political adherences and religious alliances. For example, J. M. Small, a general store owner, was described as a man who "is always ready to promote any cause which serves to advance the interests of the town, and is altogether a 'hale fellow'." In the same tribute, Bywater points out that while President of the Retail Merchants' Association, Small "put through some good measures for the local merchants."[33]

Also, in appeal to the agricultural sector, D. Kennedy was described as "a veritable farmer's man, and besides being an extensive grain dealer, he buys all products of the farm, for which the highest cash prices are paid."[34] There was always a keen awareness of the rural-urban inter-relationship.

The *Souvenir* edition of the *Arthur Enterprise News* was a fine piece of memorabilia and a forthright booster attempt to entice interested parties to invest in the future of the village. It was Mr. Bywater's last major work as editor of the newspaper which changed hands in late August, 1908.

Rixon Rafter was the successor to Bywater and, like his predecessor, he was to "write with conviction."[35] His outlook was expressed in his first editorial "Salutation": "We are living in a progressive age and if we are to keep pace with the times 'continued advancement' must be our watchword."[36]

Rafter was progressive in the tone of his editorials. He expounded on "The Need for Playgrounds" and described the merits of having a Retail Merchants' Association.[37] In the former case, he referred to American city concern with parks, and in the latter, he referred to the success of Guelph's Association. His handicap of blindness did not prevent him from keeping abreast of current developments elsewhere.

As with his predecessors, he encouraged villagers and people in the area to patronize local businesses. He urged them to do so in the following words:

> Spend your money at home with people who have interest in your town. By doing this the town is kept

> up, property is made more valuable, conveniences are enlarged and opportunities for financial improvement are opened. The prosperity of the large city firm cannot benefit you in anyway. A decrease in local business is your direct detrement [sic] as modern commercial arrangements always connect buying and selling in the one business.[38]

Rafter also pressed for the village leaders to apply for a Carnegie library grant such as had been obtained by other nearby localities.[39] He strenuously promoted a by-law "providing for the establishment of a Free Public Library in Arthur" in order to provide wider access to material beyond the Mechanics' Institute.[40] As he queried his readers "Why Not Have One Too?", he attempted to sell the concept by writing the following: "The town would come into possession of a handsome edifice which would be a credit to the town and a source of pride and satisfaction."[41] Although a by-law was passed in favour of applying for a Carnegie Library, Arthur's application was rejected, according to a recent study of Carnegie's philanthropic gestures.[42] The hopes of Arthurites to erect a dual purpose library-auditorium building were dashed although nearby Grand Valley achieved a similar goal.[43]

As the decade drew to a close, *Enterprise* issues contained articles which would suggest that the village was prospering despite the inertia of its entrepreneurs and leaders. Needless to say, Rafter delegated such items to the front page of the *Enterprise.* One such positive development was the opening of a new C.P.R. station at Arthur, built at the instigation of the Company. In booster-like fashion, Rafter analyzed the current and potential marketing position of the village:

> Arthur is the grain market for a large part of Peel, West Luther, West Garafraxa, Maryborough, and Arthur Townships and while that business remains in the hands of those who at present control it, Arthur is assured of a very large shipping trade. Last summer the modern safety switches were installed in the yard. Siding has been put in wherever necessary and the shipping facilities are now of the best. In the past eleven years Mr. McCarroll has seen the shipping business of his station more than doubled which speaks well for the prosperity of the town and adjacent country. We are surrounded by one of the wealthiest

> and most fertile farming districts in the Province and Arthur gets but what she desires in having a modern station and shipping yard.[44]

Throughout the decade, there was a continued awareness of the river, road and rail advantages of Arthur's setting.

This period also saw the forwarding of another railroad proposal. As did his predecessor, By water, Rafter supported this venture. This one originated from the People's Railway Company which hoped to establish a terminus at Arthur along a network between Berlin and Guelph.[45]

The final major issue to command Rafter's attention was that of establishing a waterworks system for the town. Again, Rafter echoed Bywater as he wrote of the benefits which would accrue to the village such as increased fire safety and decreased insurance costs. As his headline urged readers to "VOTE FOR THE BY-LAW, FOR ADVANCEMENT, PROGRESS AND BETTERMENT OF TOWN," he proceeded to expand upon his reasons for urging an affirmative vote:

> Not the least important of these refers to the position we would be placed in, by the installation of a water system, to bid for some of the manufactories which are needed for the building up of our Ontario towns, and which are constantly being acquired by many of them.[46]

Rafter's booster-like ambitions for Arthur had been strengthened by the Council's feedback from a tour of nearby Palmerston's successful system. Described as a "bustling centre of railwayism," Palmerston's water, electric light and sewerage developments were, according to Rafter, within the financial reaches of Arthur. His glowing account of the tour also included a mention of Palmerston's multi-purpose Carnegie Library and ended with a "goodly treat to the inner man set forth by mine host of the Hess Hotel."[47]

Rafter continued to pursue the waterworks issue and linked it to the growing need for improved sewerage systems. In both cases, he cited successful examples of publicly-supported ventures — Palmerston in the former case, and Clinton in the latter.[48]

Throughout the latter half of the decade, the *Enterprise* editors promoted, and won support for transportation and public works schemes. Also, a Board of Trade had been suggested, a Retail Merchants' Association formed, and a popular Old Boys' Reunion had been organized with the

intent of encouraging developers to visit the village, as well as former Arthurites.

Throughout the decade, the *Enterprise* editors frequently compared the village with other municipalities. Following in this tradition, it is not surprising that one of Rafter's major closing editorials for the decade should concern itself with the issue of Arthur's growth, or the lack thereof, along with its relative lack of development in comparison to a nearby centre. In a blunt, straightforward piece of prose entitled "WHO HURT A TOWN", Rafter expresses sentiments worthy of consideration while being mindful of the seemingly prosperous times.

> A matter in which the citizens of any town should be vitally interested is its healthy and permanent growth and development. In a great measure this growth depends on the interest which the residents of a place have in it and its progress. While natural conditions are largely responsible for the establishment of large towns and cities there are many thriving towns all over Canada which have no natural advantages worth speaking of. One has not to seek far to find thriving towns of two, three or four thousand of a population which have no water power, no shipping facilities and have not even competing lines of railway and yet are prosperous, and decidedly optimistic regarding their continued development. The status which these places have attained must be almost entirely due to the push and enterprise of their citizens.
>
> To become more explicit; within twenty miles of Arthur is a thriving little town, which, when the last census was taken 1901 had a smaller population than this town. When the census is again taken next year, it will be larger. Until a couple of years ago, it had only one line of railroad running through it. It has no water power, worth speaking of. It is not surrounded by a larger or a finer farming community than is the case here. There does not seem to be any reason in the world why it should be a better manufacturing center than Arthur, but, in the past ten years it has grown while Arthur has gone back. Whats the reason. Perhaps one of the big reasons is that in the one place, its citizens are optimistic regarding the possibilities of the place while in the other town the citizens are decidedly pessimistic believing that there [sic] town can

> only be a shopping place for the farming community which supports it and that no one should ever suggest its becoming anything else. If the citizens of every place similarly situated to Arthur had been thoroughly convinced that their town could not and should not grow, not one of them would have progressed. The fact however, that some done [sic] it, proves that there is no unsurmountable difficulty in the way of any of them doing likewise.[49]

Rafter's prediction of the census population statistic was accurate and, in fact, the population of Arthur village in 1911 had declined by fourteen per cent from 1901 and was listed as 1,102.[50]

Such a significant decline in population despite the overt booster spirit of Arthur's newspaper editors, raises questions as to the success of their efforts in promoting their village.

This study of the newspaper records of the decade has revealed that the village of Arthur lacked the strident boosters found in these years in other communities.[51] According to news reports of the decade, village council members did not actively pursue great degrees of bonus-supported development. The same reporting, however, did indicate that individuals were willing to act on suggested improvements — from sidewalks to library to waterworks — in response to editorial encouragement and proposals from groups such as rail companies. Their decision-making was done at a very immediate level characteristic of other small communities.[52] Council members and founders of the village were the focal points of the *ENTERPRISE SOUVENIR* edition, and their contributions were outlined in a positive, supportive manner. In this same issue, the editor published a description of "Arthur at a Glance" which was aimed at "outside" entrepreneurs who would want to take advantage of the "place" concept and Arthur's numerous assets which were listed as follows:

> Wide, shaded streets, beautiful level roads in all parts of the town, well built and substantial homes, with beautiful grounds.
> Splendid shipping facilities.
> A town of fine churches; with Public, Separate, and High Schools.
> A high proportion of families who own their own homes.
> Beautiful shaded streets.
> Several parks and agricultural grounds.

A climate unexcelled in Canada.
A contented and prosperous community.
Seven miles of granolithic walks.[53]

Indeed, Arthurites were proud of their village although this pride was not accompanied by the aggressive tendencies of big city boosters. The existence of such contrasting degrees of booster spirit within a single definition has led to consideration of wider themes in the urban history framework. One author suggests that a town or village, like Arthur, "is not a failure but rather a necessary link between rural areas and major cities."[54]

Fred Dahms' detailed study of Wellington County "central places"[55] and "declining villages"[56] revealed that certain municipalities survived the changing times and economic conditions while others eventually vanished from the map. Villages such as Arthur were able to maintain their existence, if in a modified form, due to the fact that they maintained certain functions of a service nature or otherwise.[57]

Despite the facts then, that Arthur lost some of its populace in response to homesteader ads from Western Canada and Ontario[58] and that it failed to surpass its neighbour communities in the decade, 1901-1911, Arthur did not decline into oblivion. According to Dahms, it maintained its place on the map along with other early settled small communities such as Fergus and Elora, despite some of the earlier mentioned reasons for decline, and lack of a strident booster group aiming to spur its growth.

According to historians Alan Artibise and Paul-Andre Linteau, in the scheme of urban history, boosterism falls into the category of "Promotion and Economic Control" with respect to "Organizing Urban Space."[59] As editors of the local newspaper, Thynne, Bywater and Rafter strove to promote village physical and economic development. Their efforts and small successes were most certainly expressions of booster spirit.

If, according to the definition of boosterism, growth is the ultimate aim of such promotion, Arthur can hardly be viewed as a successful booster town — it was far removed from the success of a town like Orillia. However, in the context of Dahms' findings concerning the survival of certain central places in Wellington county, this failure can be interpreted as a qualified one. The success of boosterism

within a small village must be related also to factors beyond control of the community's promoters and governing elite. Although Arthur's place within the framework of urban historical boosterism is minute, it is significant that it remained nevertheless, a viable functioning geographical urban unit.

In essence, with the help of booster editors, Arthur managed to remain at least within its own success aspirations, "a contented and prosperous community."

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[47]*Ibid.*, May 18, 1909 — tour; Apr. 1, 1909 — Arthur's finance capability.

[48]*Ibid.*, May 20, 1910.

[49]*Ibid.*, Aug. 4, 1910.

[50]*Census of Canada*, 1911, v. 1, Area and Population by Provinces, Districts, and Subdistricts, Table II.

[51]L. Johnson, "Ideology and Political Economy in Urban Growth: Guelph, 1827-1927," in *Shaping, op. cit.*, p. 30-64.

[52]Neville O. Matthews, "Small Town Power and Politics" in *Politics and Government of Urban Canada*, eds. Lionel D. Feldman and Michael D. Goldrick (Toronto, 1969), p. 134-161, especially p. 159-160.

[53]*Souvenir, op. cit.*, p. 13.

[54]Gaffield, *op. cit.*, p. 267-268.

[55]F. Dahms, "Central Places in the Study Area, 1851-1970," *UHR* (1975), p. 9-30.

[56]F. Dahms, "Declining Villages?" in *Second Annual Agricultural History of Ontario Seminar Proceedings*, ed. T. A. Crowley (Guelph, 1977), p. 50-65.

[57]F. Dahms, *Historical Background, Population Change and Agriculture: Wellington County, 1840-1976*, v.l (Guelph, 1978); See Table 4, Population: Well. Co., 1871-1976, p. 51.

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Art Carr's college

by Arthur Carr

< *ed. note:* In the fall of 1985 the Wellington County Historical Research Society held an open meeting in Arthur on the theme of the weekly newspaper. The highlight of the afternoon was the talk by Art Carr, who was editor and publisher of the Palmerston Observer from 1934 until 1978. Mr. Carr spoke of the educational function performed by weekly newspapers and printing shops in training apprentices who went on to distinguished careers elsewhere in the country. We believe that this is a facet of small town life that is neither appreciated nor widely known. We asked Mr. Carr for a copy of his talk for publication. This is his reply. >

It was flattering to be told that a talk of mine had interested you, and that it contained material of possible interest for your *History.* I was asked to send you a copy of that talk.

Now, that bit of chatter in Arthur was about 99.9 per cent extemporaneous. As I recall it, I was asked to talk about services a small town newspaper provides, and chose to zero in on a phase of the industry that would be almost unknown to the general public. That was an extension of our educational system, where the so-called 'high school dropouts' could enter an education-filled field, and achieve success in one of the professions. I think I started with an Arthur Alder, one of those described above, who is now General Manager of Allmaps Canada Limited. Wound up with our last protege before retiring, Ronald Wassink, now editor of the Walkerton *Herald Times.*

Newspapers were not alone in this role. I have in mind a now defunct automotive sales and service industry, that for I believe some sixty years served Palmerston and area with Chrysler products. This was McCrae's Garage. This firm took in lads who felt their formal education was over, and entered the labour force as apprentice automotive mechanics, or sales and service personnel.

But now to a list of the Palmerston people who went through apprenticeship at the Palmerston Observer. This covers a period commencing April 1st, 1934, to my retirement seven or eight years ago. The list that follows is possibly not quite chronological, and some may be missed. But here we go:

Norman Carlyle Hancock — deceased. Was foreman of the composing room at Duncan Brothers, printers in Hamilton, at the time of his death. Norman was the navigator on the 'Pathfinder' bomber that dropped the first load of incendiaries on Hitler's mountain-top hideaway.

Arthur Alder — became Artistic Director for what was Canada's most famous quality printing firm, Rolph, Clark and Stone. This was taken over by Rand-McNally of the U.S.A. These folks altered the name to Allmaps Canada Limited, and Alder is their National Sales Manager. Arthur has prepared a rather remarkable history of printing since Gutenberg's time up to the latest in technology. In 1986 he presented this to the Conestogo Craftsmen's Club in Kitchener, and I was booked to introduce him.

Lloyd R. T. Johnston — leaving *Observer* worked for Kitchener *Record,* Oshawa *Times,* Cobourg, Toronto *Telegram,* then Canadian Press at Toronto where he was Special Sports Wire Service Editor. Asthmatic condition forces early retirement.

Kenneth Pritchard — leaving *Observer* worked for Guelph *Mercury,* Oshawa *Times,* Kingston *Whig-Standard,* Cornerbrook *Star.* Was Canadian Press Managing Editor of their New York bureau for 12 years. Moved to Toronto where he was CP's Special World News Service Editor until his death from heart seizure while spending a weekend visiting his mother in Palmerston.

Courtney B. 'Red' Chick — worked London *Free Press* and Kitchener *Record* on leaving Palmerston. Entered public relations with Seagram's Distilleries, Ford Motor Company, Canadian Automobile Association. Is generally credited with the system of parking car on road shoulder, and hanging white 'flag' in driver's door handle as a signal of distress. Last heard of he was Canadian consul in Philadelphia.

G. M. Thuell — worked London *Free Press* and Kitchener *Record* after Palmerston stint. Recruited by Paul Starr, Orangeville, to prepare and write copy for this once rather

famous monthly catalogue of available properties. Now retired in Palmerston.

Gordon Widmeyer — left *Observer* for Blenheim *News-Tribune.* Started his own commercial printing office and was highly successful supplying the food processing trade in that area. Was highway accident fatality while yet quite young.

Ronald McCallum — nephew of above. Left *Observer* to serve with uncle; now in Leamington continuing to operate the business his uncle founded.

James Milne — left *Observer* to continue studies in graphics at Ryerson. Worked several places in commercial printing and became an expediter with General Printers at Oshawa, and is still a resident of that city.

Vernon Wooddissee — left *Observer* for Sudbury. Linotype operator there. Later returned to Kitchener where he presently resides and is a typesetter with a commercial printing plant.

Ross Patterson — deceased. Bachelor. General printer, type composition, pressman, bindery, etc. with *Observer.* Never left Palmerston as he chose to remain to maintain home for aged mother.

Rex Fee — still on staff of *Observer* as a general printer. Like Patterson, he chose to maintain widowed mother in their home for many years, farm three miles west of Palmerston.

Laverne Long — left Palmerston for Orangeville *Banner,* then Mount Forest *Confederate,* then the Thompson chain, first at Guelph and many years later ending his stint with this outfit at Sarasota, Florida. Returned to Palmerston to buy and operate the Palmerston *Observer* on his retirement.

James Carnahan — left *Observer* to work at Guelph, later Drayton, then back to *Observer.* Was editor under Laverne Long. Recently left the trade to enter a partnership in the hospitality industry, and operates motel, restaurant, holiday resort complex between Meaford and Thornbury.

Tom McCoag — left *Observer* to take course in photography at Ryerson. Served with Port Elgin *Independent,* Springhill and Parrsborough weekly papers. Has for several years operated the Amherst bureau of the Halifax *Herald.*

Bill Carr — the only one of our four children to stay in the graphic arts. Graduated from Printing Management, Ryerson Polytechnic Institute. Went into sales of printing in Toronto. Turned to sales of printing equipment, cameras

and associated supplies and is now a Technical Representative for Dupont Canada in British Columbia and Alberta.

Ronald Massink — left *Observer* to serve with *Brussels Post,* Seaforth *Huron Expositor,* and is currently editor of the Walkerton *Herald-Times.*

This seems, at the moment, to exhaust my memory of male types who went through the mill with us. But there were many feminine names and faces on the list. The female members tend to marry and leave the profession, change their names, and are 'lost' to me. Some return when families reach adolescence, while others just seem to get lost in the mists of time. However, here goes with a few that come to mind:

Marjorie Struke — left the *Observer* for the war industries. Married. Heard she was, years later, on staff with the printing firm Richardson, Bond and Wright at Owen Sound.

Thelma Smith — (Mrs. Russell Craig) left the trade for wedlock. Later, as a Guelph resident, she operated a small printing plant for an insurance company in that city.

Dorothy Roberts — Linotype operator. Left *Observer* for Mount Forest *Confederate.* Last heard of was employed in Hamilton.

Phyllis Honeyford — Linotype operator. Left *Observer* for Guelph and later Owen Sound, with a short stay at Huntsville in between.

Florence Donnelly — worked only at the *Observer.* Now retired. Florence was a 'wartime expediency,' having already retired from school teaching.

Jean Cox — married and left the trade. Now a Guelph resident.

Freda Carr — (nee Thuell) — another 'wartime expediency.' Capable of anything in the printing office except darkroom technician and press operations. Still on periodic call by *Observer* when a staff emergency arises; for example, a snow storm blocking roads can keep three-fifths of the present staff from making it on a blustery winter morning.

Mrs. Arden Barker — (nee Helen McCreight). Married but returned to the profession when children reached their teens. Was for many years editor of the Milverton *Sun.* Now is a columnist with the Stratford *Beacon-Herald,* producing a column of chatter and observations entitled "On My Mind."

Gloria Moffatt — (now Mrs. Allan Patterson). Left the trade when family arrived. Is now holding a secretarial position with the County Health Unit.

And that seems to have exhausted my memory. I know that if I listed those who spent time with us and left for other professions like carpentry and auto body mechanics (these two trades took no less than four of our staffers) I could come up with about 38 young people who served with us.

Scottish Town Planning Influences In Early Fergus

by Otto Bouwman

In the early decades of the nineteenth century, a group of businessmen of Scottish origin controlled vast areas of land in Upper Canada. Sometimes nicknamed the 'Scottish Mafia' by modern historians, this group of men, who included William Dickson of Gait, William Gilkison of Elora and James Crooks of Flamboro, were connected by blood, marriage, friendship and commerce. They bought and developed much land which was later sold to the newly-arrived immigrants. Two of this group, Adam Fergusson and James Webster, purchased in 1833 some 7,367 acres from one of their Scottish friends, Thomas Clark.[1] Although Fergusson and Webster had no experience as developers, Fergusson did possess some fame as a writer on the subjects of agriculture and emigration, and Webster had important commercial connections. They soon made repututations for their development of the new village of Fergus and a large part of Nichol Township. Their intentions were similar to those of most of the other Scottish developers in the province, and had a great deal in common with the town builders active at the time in Scotland.

To understand fully the ideas that produced the early planning of the village of Fergus, it is necessary to look back to eighteenth century Scotland. There, between 1730 and 1830, upwards of 130 small towns had been planned and developed by large landowners.[2] The most significant purpose of such towns was to draw the surplus population from the surrounding countryside.[3] The new emphasis on livestock and increasing productivity in agriculture generally had meant that many farmers were being displaced. At the

same time, such small towns avoided the evils associated with the large industrialized centres which were rapidly expanding, and were the major alternative for many of these people.[4] In these new towns, a close link was to be maintained to their agricultural hinterlands. The towns were the homes of many agricultural labourers, as well as artisans and small manufacturers, who sold their products to farmers in the local market square.[5] These new towns were meant to remain largely independent of larger and older centres.

The development and planning of these villages was not only of interest to landowners. Many other Scottish citizens showed a keen interest in them as well. For example, The Highland and Agricultural Society of Scotland was established in 1783 "for the improvement of the Highlands."[6] To the members of this group, one of the most significant ways to improve living conditions in the Highlands was "by establishing towns and villages."[7] An indication of this Society's interest in town building was that, during the 1790's, it offered prizes for the best plans for inland and coastal villages. The Society also sought to improve living conditions through the practice of new agricultural techniques.[8] Its leaders were interested in both the aesthetic and functional qualities of the new town.

It was in this environment that the founders of Fergus were raised. Adam Fergusson, following his family's tradition, was himself a prominent member of the Highland and Agricultural Society when he emigrated to Upper Canada in the 1830's. Town planning was not foreign to him. As might be expected, Fergusson's personal background became evident in the early growth of Fergus.

There was little planning involved in the early years of many Upper Canadian towns. These grew in a haphazard way around a business or transportation facility. Others were carefully conceived and planned before the first spade of earth was turned. Fergus is an example of the latter. Fergusson, in fact, was modelling the entire land purchase on a Scottish estate. The townsite was very small, and there was to be a close relationship between the village and countryside. The prominence of the square as the central focus of the town shows that the village was to function as the agricultural market for the farmers who lived on the

surrounding farms. The orientation of the site along the river and its power sites rather than with the boundary lines and concessions of the township shows that manufacturing was also to be a function. This is clear from the rapid growth of mills and tanneries along the river in the early years.

An important distinction should be noted between Fergus and the new towns of Scotland. Scottish towns were meant to draw off the surplus population from the overcrowded countryside on the Highlands. Fergus was an outpost in the wilderness, and it had to promote and facilitate agricultural settlement in the surrounding forests.

There were other similarities which Fergus shared with the Scottish new towns. Perhaps the most significant of these was proprietary ownership and control. In Scotland, a landowner held a large acreage which tenants rented and cultivated. A new town would lead to a larger population and increased rents.[9]

Proprietary ownership was not successful in Canada because sufficient land was available to allow virtually anyone to become a landowner. Nevertheless, considerable control could still be exercised. In Fergus, the proprietors expressed their intention to be selective in choosing their settlers. In an 1835 article on the new town of Fergus, the *Edinburgh Journal* reported that

> It is Fergusson's resolution. . .to sell no land to settlers of doubtful or indifferent character for any temptation or price.[10]

During the first years of the settlement there were many farm lot sales, presumably to families who met Fergusson's high standards. The first sales of farm land were 100 acres to David Smith on Nov. 34, 1834 for £100, and 207 acres to William Buist on Feb. 7, 1835 for £155.11. These were typical market prices for land in centre Wellington at the time.

A larger degree of control was exercised by Fergusson and Webster over Fergus town lots. Prior to the end of 1841, only five town lots are recorded as having been sold.[12] This was a figure far short of the number of families in the town. The prices charged were in line with similar property in other towns: £6/5, or $25 per lot.[13] The actual arrangements in effect between Fergusson and Webster as proprietors and the settlers is not known, but there are several possibilities.

The Original Plan of Fergus:

The actual map seems to have disappeared, but this is the original layout of Fergus as reconstructed from Land Registry records. The probable date is late 1834. Differences of opinion between Fergusson and Webster in the late 1830's resulted in the town being divided, with Fergusson taking the lots to the west of Tower Street and Webster those to the east; this took effect legally in 1841. After this time virtually all development took Place on Webster's lands.

The land may have been leased or rented. Alternatively, the owners may have retained full title themselves until the lots had been paid in full, rather than register a mortgage against the property. Whatever the arrangement, it gave Fergusson and Webster a great deal of control over makeup and development of early Fergus.

Proprietary ownership, while not the rule, was not uncommon in Canada in the years before 1850. [14] As well, many towns had been established in the Maritimes and the American colonies on this plan.[15] It was less successful when settlers could perceive greater freedom and opportunity elsewhere.

Another similarity between Fergus and the Scottish small towns was the town plan, or layout of streets and lots. Town builders of the time usually adhered to the 'classical ideal.'[16] Their plans were characterized by a gridiron layout of streets, a central marketplace, and symmetrical balance. Although all maps showing the original plan of Fergus seem to have disappeared, the layout of the town can be reconstructed from Land Registry records. There were about 125 lots, arranged according to eighteenth century ideals of balance, on either side of Tower Street. Placed prominently in front of the centrally located market square was the Presbyterian Church. The gridiron layout of streets was adopted almost universally at the time.[17] Not only was it the least confusing pattern, but it also was the easiest and quickest to survey.[18] Interestingly, this first plan of Fergus appears to have been adopted without consideration of the topography of the site. James Square, in front of the church was located inconveniently on the side of a hill. Some of the early accounts of the settlers hint at the awkwardness of the situation in the marketplace.[19]

The early town plans are not the only indication that the early development of Fergus was heavily influenced by Scottish traditions. Fergusson and Webster wished to open up the land to Scottish agriculturists and to establish a "controlled" Scottish community.[20] The extent to which they were successful is evident from the ethnic origins of the inhabitants: the early settlers in Fergus and the surrounding farms were almost entirely Scottish and members of the Presbyterian Church. A. E. Byerly identified the origins of fifty families in his *Fergus, or the Fergusson-Webster Settlement.*

Of these, forty-six are of Scottish origin.[21] It also appears that many of the settlers were acquainted with Fergusson or Webster in Scotland, although little is known of these relationships in the mother country.[22] Large numbers emigrated from the area surrounding Aberdeen. Almost all were Lowland Scots.

> With the exception of one or two families, the earliest settlers to come to the Fergus areas. . .were men and women who were exceptionally well educated and religious people. Many of the men were exceptionally well educated college graduates.[23]

High educational standards and ethnic homogeneity were the two notable characteristics of this community in its first decade.

As anticipated, the community did develop as did many new towns in Scotland. The establishment of a benevolent association in 1834, the St. Andrew's Society, followed soon after by the Curling Club, are obvious indications.[24] Perhaps the clearest indication of the Scottish character of the community was St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, which was effectively the established church of Fergus in the early years. The first church building was commissioned by Fergusson, who hired and paid the contractor.[25] This is not necessarily an indication that Fergusson was devoutly religious, but rather that the church was a facility that would satisfy the needs of potential settlers. It was part of the infrastructure that would make the area more attractive to prospective immigrants. The agnostic William Gilkison made similar plans in his community — Elora — several miles down the Grand River.[26]

During the 1840's the community became much more cosmopolitan in the ethnic origins of the settlers, and it appears that Fergusson and Webster abandoned all hope of maintaining Fergus as an exclusively Scottish community. However, there were other issues related to town building that gave them much more trouble, and which led to the breakup of the partnership in 1841.

The Fergusson-Webster Settlement was foremost a business venture. To attract the type of settlers the founders wanted required the building of an infrastructure providing not only a school and church, but also commercial, milling and even manufacturing facilities.

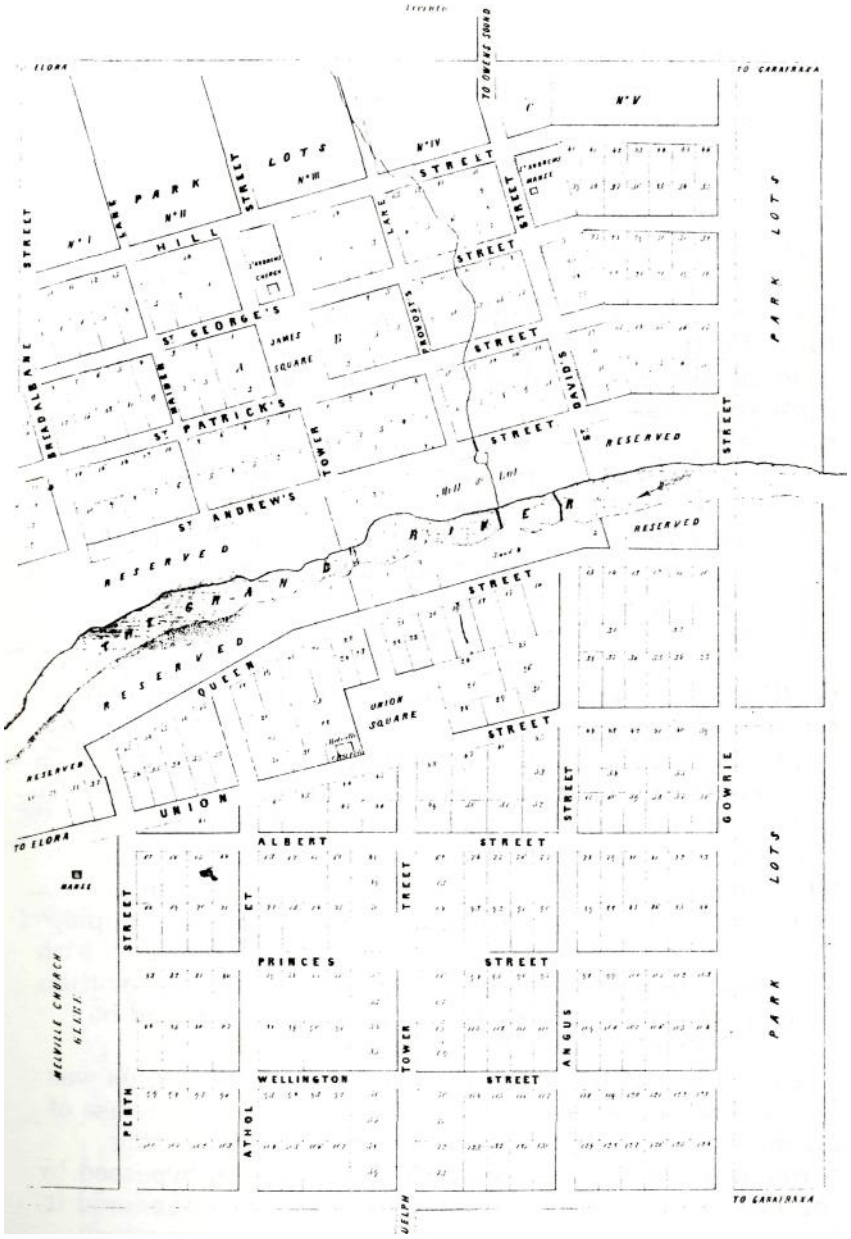
These required enormous expenditures, probably far greater than the founders had anticipated, before the investment could be recovered through land sales and marketable agricultural commodities.

When Fergusson and Webster began developing the village in the early 1830's Webster had taken the responsibility of administering the affairs of the community. Fergusson, on the other hand, moved to the Waterdown area but retained a prominent nominal position in the community.[27] He was honorary president of some of the early organizations such as the St. Andrew's Society and the Curling Club. Although exact details are not known, financial responsibilities were divided between the two men.

Neither Webster nor Fergusson seem to have left letters or diaries dealing with their business affairs, so we can only make inferences about their intentions by examining their actions. Conflict arose between the two, it seems, over the nature of the economy of the village and the role of growth. Fergusson tried to adhere closely to the original Scottish new town concept, in which Fergus would have been a small market and manufacturing town, serving essentially those settlers who occupied the Fergusson-Webster portion of Nichol Township. Fergusson's basic orientation was to agriculture, and would remain so all his life. He did not view Fergus as a potential major centre, but rather as an integral part of the whole Nichol development.

Webster, on the other hand, could perceive possibilities in Canada that did not exist in Scotland, and that Scottish landholding practices would retard the development of the village. Circumstances changed rapidly in the 1830's. In 1833 Fergus had been an outpost in the wilderness. Within a decade Fergus began to be influenced by the communities and environment around it. Webster, it seems, came to believe that Fergus could be *a* greater success as a manufacturing town and regional market than as a small servicing facility for a small agricultural hinterland. By 1840 he had already begun to invest and borrow heavily to finance industries in his own name.

In 1841 the two men divided the assets. On June 4, 1841 Webster sold to Fergusson his half-share in 2,741 acres of unsold Nichol Township farmland for £1,400.28. This transaction left to Fergusson all responsibility for selling



The 1847 Sale: Webster had additional lots surveyed in the 1840's. This map was prepared for a land auction in Sept., 1847. By this time Fergusson had regained his optimism for the village: the lots east of Tower Street and south of the river were his.

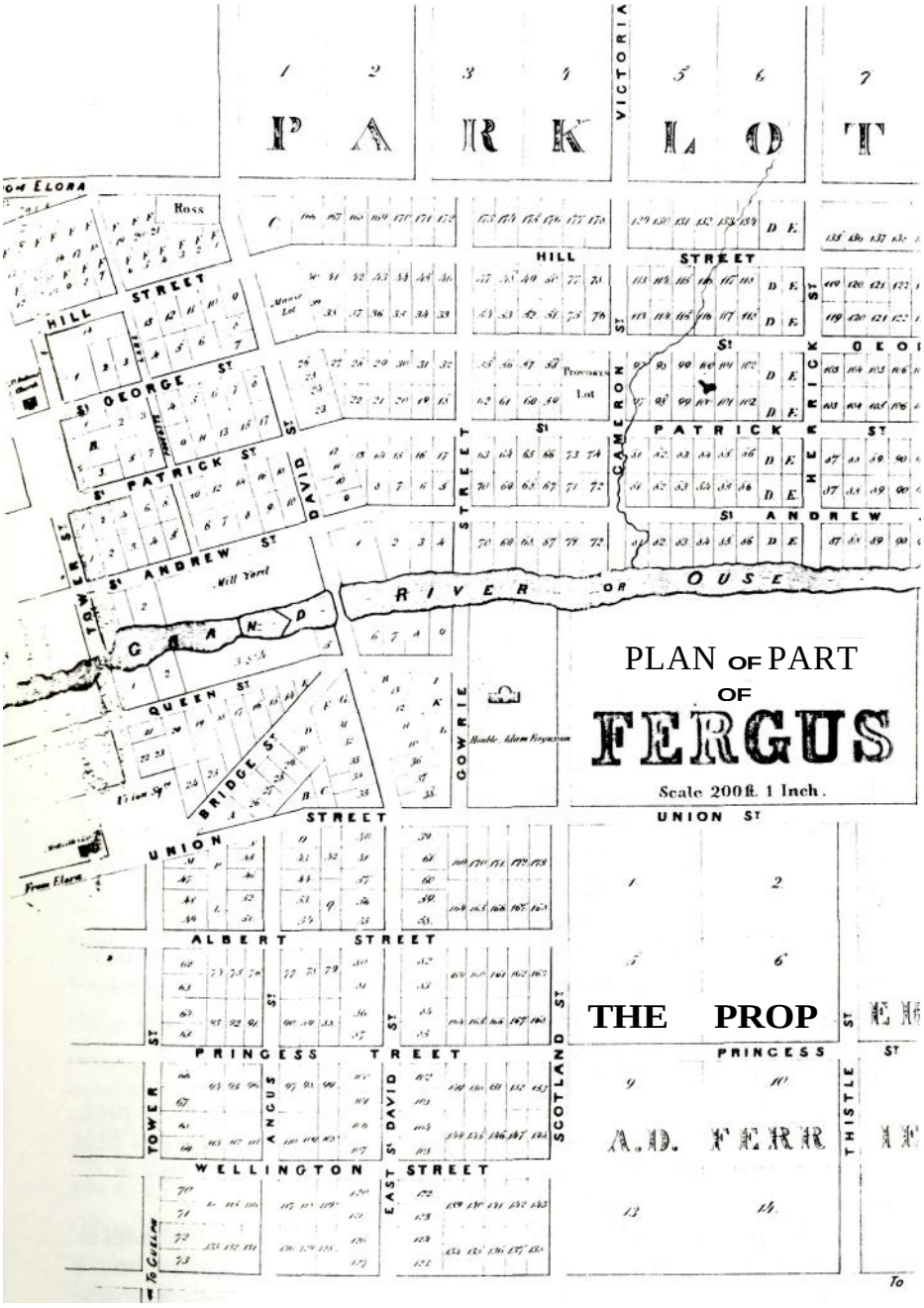
and settling the farm land. In November, the townsite of Fergus was divided. Adam Fergusson paid Webster £100 for his share in the part of Fergus south-west of Tower Street, and Webster paid Fergusson an equal amount to gain full control over the remainder of Fergus to the north-east of Tower Street.[29]

The course of the development of Fergus is clear already on the map drawn by A. D. Fordyce in 1845.[30] Virtually all development has taken place in Webster's portion of the town. By the late 1840's Webster abandoned totally the original ideals of building Fergus in the mold of the Scottish new towns. Fergus became an industrial and speculative village — dozens of new lots were added to the village plan, including a large tract on the south side of the Grand River.[31] The speculative fever in Fergus during 1847 and 1848 was fed by the prospect that the newly opened Owen Sound Road would turn Fergus into a market town of regional significance.

It was a prospect never considered in the original conception of Fergus. Significantly, the new toll road to the north entered Fergus by St. David Street, in the middle of Webster's land holdings. By this time James Webster was the Conservative Member of Parliament for Wellington. In this capacity he helped secure a provincial subsidy of £1,500 for the road.[32] In 1853 Webster added a huge new tract of town lots to the village on the northeast side, which pushed the village to the Garafraxa Township boundary.[33] In all his additions to Fergus Webster employed a grid pattern to the streets, but it was in alignment with the township boundaries and concession roads rather than with the original village. It was a layout that could be extended easily in any direction.

A notable feature of the new lands added to Fergus was Union Square. Development was expected here because of an increase in traffic from Elora and Guelph passing through to the north. James Square had been bypassed by the new roads, and the slope of the land there rendered it less suitable for market purposes. These changes were distinct breaks with the initial plans and show the adaptations made to accommodate new circumstances.

Webster appears to have adapted to the new opportunities much more quickly than did Fergusson. Not only was



Webster Had Big Plans:
Additional lots were surveyed for this plan, registered by Webster in 1854. Note the addition of Bridge Street to accommodate traffic for the Owen Sound Road.

Webster more prepared to sell land to all classes and ethnic groups,[34] but he also made significant changes in the town plan to promote the growth of both Fergus and his own personal fortune. In the 1853 resurvey, Bridge Street, running between Union Square and St. David Street was added to the plan. The land along it was divided into small lots with narrow frontages. Clearly, Webster expected commercial growth to occur along this street.

Adam Fergusson's role in the development of Fergus after 1841 was a much more passive one. The maps of 1847 show that some of his land south of the Grand River was surveyed into town lots, but a plan was not registered until 1857.[35] By this time, Fergusson had acquired two partners: his son George D., and John Watt. George Fergusson was certainly the active partner. He was by this time resident in Fergus, agent for the Bank of Montreal, and involved in a number of business ventures. It would appear that Adam Fergusson had retained much longer than Webster the original vision of Fergus as a new town on the Scottish model, and was at best indifferent to the type of expansion pursued by his former partner.

Adam Fergusson's indifference to growth does not mean that he lost interest in the village. If anything, his stature and influence grew over time. For instance, the divisions within the Presbyterian Church in the mid-1840's, which resulted in the Free Kirk seceding from the Auld Kirk, generated powerful tensions in Fergus.[36] Led by the minister, Rev. George Smellie, 360 of the 449 members of St. Andrew's left to form their own congregation. Under Adam Fergusson's influence, compromises were reached quickly. He negotiated a settlement by which the two congregations would temporarily use the same church building but at different times.[37] As well, he donated a plot of land adjoining Union Square for a church, a ten acre plot for a manse and glebe, and £25 in cash.[38] This was the beginning of Melville Church.

By the middle 1850's, Fergus was a town with a character totally different from the one it possessed only twenty years before, although it remained very much a Scottish community. Fergusson and Webster did not realize in the 1830's just how different social and economic conditions in Upper Canada were, compared to the old country. Nevertheless,

they succeeded in establishing an enduring community that would become the second largest municipality in Wellington County. Notwithstanding the changes and additions made to Fergus, the original conception of the village as a Scottish new town has had an enduring legacy. The guiding and controlling hands of Adam Fergusson and James Webster might be long forgotten, but the streets of the first town plan today form the principal commercial district, and the Scottish heritage of the community continues to be its proudest legacy.

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[21]A. E. Byerly, *Fergus, or the Fergusson-Webster Settlement* (Elora, 1932), p. 262.

[22]*Ibid.,* p. 92.

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[29]Instruments A338, dated Nov. 2, 1841; A343, dated Nov. 19, 1841, Township of Nichol, Land Registry Records.

[30]This map is reproduced in Mestern, *Looking Back,* Vol. 1, p. 87.

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Historical Writing On Wellington County

by Steve Thorning

The writing of Wellington County's history began with members of the second generation of settlers and the children of the first pioneers. These people sensed that their communities were changing dramatically and abruptly, and they wanted to preserve something of the activities and experiences of the first years. With the settlement of Wellington stretching over a seventy-five year period, this historical impulse was a gradual one. By the mid-1860's, though, it is clearly present, and our earliest historical writing dates from these years. The modest aims of the early historians to merely record and preserve history are no longer the dominant ones, but nevertheless remain a major objective of many of the County's historians.

Styles and forms of historical writing persist, but each generation asks new questions of the past. What seems trivial and insignificant to one generation is of vital concern to the next. The ways in which Wellington's historians over the past 125 years have written about the past is itself a fascinating and instructive exercise.

Newspaper editors were responsible for the first written history in Wellington, and they played the dominant role in both the writing and publishing of local history until the 1930's. The Guelph Mercury's historical columns in 1866 are the beginning of written history in Wellington; these appeared almost simultaneously with a series in the Elora Observer. J. M. Shaw, editor of this paper, claimed to have planned as early as 1863 to print recollections of early settlers in North Wellington. Shaw's series, running sporadically from March to November of 1866, included articles by Walter Newman, John Keith, George Elmslie,

Abraham Matthews, Joseph Carder and Robert Mitchell. Shaw was disappointed by the poor response from the north of the County. These townships were simply too new to have any interest in recording their history. This series, then, concentrated for the most part on Elora.

The personal memoir remained the most popular form of historical writing until well into the twentieth century. Typically, these were short pieces written or dictated by a pioneer or a long time resident and published in one of the County's newspapers. A series of such pieces in one paper often produced imitations in others. This accounts for major clusters in the mid-1870's and the late 1890's. By the 1880's, obituaries of prominent pioneers began to contain much historical material, undoubtedly based on information supplied by surviving members of the family. There were a few longer pieces in this genre, the most accessible being David Kennedy's Pioneer Days at Guelph and the County of Bruce, which appeared in 1903 and was reprinted by the Bruce County Historical Society in 1973. Articles of this general type are still published from time to time in the County's papers.

The overriding theme of these historical memoirs is the trial and hardships of the pioneers, which was followed by slow but steady progress to the present day. If anything, this theme was exaggerated by those of the second generation, whose work saw print in the years after 1900. Newspaper editors, who were the prime boosters of their communities, undoubtedly encouraged this viewpoint. However, it ignores the fact that progress was anything but steady, and that many of Wellington's communities were in a period of decline from 1880 to 1920, with some townships losing 50% of their population over this period, and the towns and villages readjusting, often painfully, to a new economic order.

The outstanding nineteenth century work by far is Annals of the Town of Guelph by C. Acton Burrows. Burrows was a young newspaperman, trained in Guelph. While in his mid-twenties he was recruited by George Drew, grandfather of the premier, to edit the Elora Standard in 1872. Drew established and subsidized this paper to further his own political career in North Wellington. By the late 1870's Burrows was back in Guelph as editor of the Herald.

SKETCHES OF NORTH WELLINGTON.

Observer Office, Elora, Jan. 15, 1866.

MY DEAR SIR:—

As you are probably aware, I am about to publish a series of Sketches, in the **Elora Observer,** descriptive of the doings of the Pioneers in North Wellington. Appended are several questions, which I am addressing to those most likely to be able to reply to them, and I should esteem it a great favor if you will carefully peruse them, and jot down and forward to me such answers as you can find time to give.

Your cordial co-operation in this work shall be duly acknowledged at the proper time, and I do hope that you will oblige me, and the readers of the OBSERVER, by sparing an hour or two of your time for the purpose of helping on the work.

Yours faithfully,

John Martin Shaw.

☞ Don't prepay your letter; I shall gladly pay postage.

1.—Who were the first settlers in your neighborhood, and when did they settle?

2.—What were the names of the first Councillors in your Township, and, if you know anything of its Municipal history, will you oblige by telling it?

3.—When were the first roads made, and bridges built? Describe the improvements under this heading which have been effected since you entered the Township.

4.—Where were the first Post-offices and Mail routes?

5.—Do you remember anything of the erection of Mills and Manufactories? If so, oblige by describing them.

6.—What were the Government prices of lands in your locality?

7.—Can you give the prices of Produce in early days, and the names of your nearest and best markets then?

8.—Was Game abundant when you settled in your Township? Had you any adventures with wild animals?

9.—What were the first means of Religious Instruction afforded in your neighborhood? Please to describe them, and the present standing of your Churches.

10.—Do you know any particulars of early settlement likely to be interesting to the public? If so, will you oblige by giving a general statement of your experiences?

He Set Out Some Guidelines For Historical Writing: J- M. Shaw of the *Elora Observer* sent this circular to some of the pioneers of North Wellington. The response was disappointing.

A writer of considerable ability, Burrows also displayed a solid historical sensibility. His book commemorated the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of Guelph, and he was able to draw on personal recollections and memoirs of early residents. He was also aware of the biases and problems inherent in these sources: he attempted to confirm his evidence with documentary evidence in municipal and land records. However, despite his critical approach to his sources, he still regarded his role as that of a compiler of factual material.

Although not a historian, David Boyle deserves consideration as one of the first men in Wellington to consider the nature of historical development. Boyle was founder of the Elora Natural History Society and the Elora Museum. He conceived the role of each rather broadly. Not only did the Museum develop an outstanding collection of Indian artifacts, Boyle's own major interest, but it also collected and displayed old mechanical equipment, natural curiosities, souvenirs picked up by local residents on their travels, fossils, and local documents and archival material.

In 1896, fifteen years after leaving Elora, Boyle wrote a local history of Scarborough Township. The style and approach he used, while novel at the time, eventually came to be the dominant one in local history writing in Wellington and elsewhere. Boyle was a champion of the topical organization, and his style was essentially descriptive. Facts spoke for themselves; accuracy of detail was vital; analysis and synthesis were unnecessary. It was an approach that had a direct influence on John Connon and his generation of Wellington historians.

Boyle did draw on his Wellington County experiences, in the form of fiction and satirical articles, published under the pseudonym of Andrew McSpurtle. Longer works of historical fiction by other writers appeared in the 1920's: Yon Toon of Mine (1924) by J. B. Perry, and Day Before Yesterday (1925) by Fred Jacob, old boys from Fergus and Elora respectively. Both authors looked back to the days of their youth: these books are sketches of small town life at the turn-of-the-century period, and undoubtedly provided amusement when they were published for those wishing to identify the real names of the characters. The historical fiction form was revived in the 1970's by Pat Mestern.

Her novels mix fiction and historical research to provide a portrait of the way the Fergus community actually functioned in a previous generation.

The 1906 Wellington County Atlas, reprinted in 1972, remains the most widely consulted reference book on Wellington's history. The work included brief histories of all the municipalities in the County, from the perspective of its political history, and with reference to material progress and the growth of institutions. This work was published at a time when the last residents with direct memories of the pioneer years were fast disappearing. It appears that the material was collected from the best local informants available; the writing and editing are clear and tight. The same qualities apply to the biographies and family histories, which give this work its lasting importance.

Formal biographies and autobiographies are not common in the Wellington County historical literature, but these are nevertheless enduring forms. Charles Clarke's Sixty Years in Upper Canada (1906) is an anecdotal autobiography by the man who was the central figure in Wellington's Reform and Liberal circles for a half-century. To those familiar with the outspoken tone of Clarke's diaries and with the vicious atmosphere of politics in Centre and North Wellington from the 1850's to the 1870's, the book is a disappointment. He paints the changes during his lifetime, in Wellington and the province as a whole, as the unfolding of a natural order of material and moral progress. We learn little of the political feuds, economic conflicts and changes in belief and prejudice that characterized the history of nineteenth century Wellington. Fortunately, a full biography of Clarke, one of the most important of Wellington's sons, is currently in progress.

Similar faults characterize All in a Day's Work (1934), by Dr Abraham Groves, though it must be admitted that the author intended only to describe some of the high points of his medical career, which was one of innovation and experimentation that often placed him in conflict with other members of his profession. The book was in part an attempt by Dr Groves to vindicate himself: he had been proven right in a number of controversies and he had reason to gloat. Dr Groves was an eccentric of a type no longer seen, and a controversial figure all his life.

"His life has been largely radical; in his methods of thought and action he has always been unorthodox," commented one critic in 1928. Nevertheless, he was a man of outstanding mental abilities, and it is regrettable that Dr Groves, with his great interest in local history, did not leave records of his experiences as a Fergus businessman and industrialist, electrical experimenter, land speculator and politician.

Ariel Dyer's The Laird of Woodhill: Adam Fergusson (1983), a short biography of the co-founder of Fergus, reflects the continuing interest in biography. The focus of this book is on the Fergusson family; this reflects the interests of the author, who is one of the most active and accomplished genealogists in the County. The book also emphasizes Fergusson's role as an agricultural innovator; there is less concerning his lengthy political career and his numerous business activities.

To date there has been no biography of J. J. Morrison, the Arthur area farmer and co-founder of the United Farmers of Ontario, though Morrison did leave a memoir which remains unpublished. Several Wellington natives who achieved fame outside the County have received biographical treatment; for example, Radio's First Voice (1970) by Ormond Raby, about Reg Fessenden, the A.M. radio pioneer who grew up in Fergus. There is a whole shelf of books about J. J. Hill, builder of the Great Northern Railway, who grew up in Eramosa Township.

The period between 1925 and 1940 may properly be described as the golden age of historical writing in Wellington County. The generation of historians active during these years included John Connon, Hugh Templin, Arthur Wright, A. E. Byerly and Abraham Groves.

Connon was the oldest of the group. Born in Elora in 1862, he had been a student of David Boyle at the Elora Public School, though an indifferent one, rarely rising out of the bottom third of his class. Nevertheless, he remained a lifelong friend of Boyle, sharing the wide-ranging curiosity of his mentor. By 1880 he was helping to support his ailing parents by photographing tourist parties in the Elora gorge; a great many of these pictures have survived. His interest in local history was piqued by the stories he heard from village old-timers who gathered in his father's store.

Through the 1890's he began gathering information that eventually found its way into print in a series of articles in the Elora Express between 1906 and 1909. The type was used also to print the pages of a projected book, of which these articles formed the first half. A number of copies of this 'half book' circulated privately. It was a long wait for the remainder of the book. A second series of articles was printed in the Fergus News-Record in 1926; these were also printed in book format and bound together, by Hugh Templin, with the first chapters which had been in storage for almost two decades. The Early History of Elora and Vicinity appeared in an edition of 400 shortly before Connon's death in 1930.

In terms of content and style, Connon's work is unique among the works of its period. Like Boyle, Connon is sensitive to the prehistory and physiography of the area. Unlike Boyle, he does not offer an organized, systematic treatment of his subject. The work consists largely of family histories, personal memoirs and other documents. Connon was meticulous in his research on the pioneer families, corresponding with all descendants he was able to locate. There are two deficiencies to Connon's work: several of the most prominent families of Elora are missing, and the economic development of the town is glossed over in two pages. Connon was also something of a plagiarizer: several of the 1866 Observer articles are included in his book verbatim, as are a number of obituaries published from the 1860's to the 1880's. Connon probably believed he was preserving the authenticity and accuracy of this information.

Despite his deficiencies as a historian, Connon was highly regarded by the younger men writing in the 1920's and 1930's, particularly as an authority on the first generation of settlers in centre Wellington. Of these men, Arthur W. Wright, editor of the Mount Forest Confederate, had been publishing locally history columns since 1901, and he was the first to publish a book. Pioneer Days in Nichol appeared in 1924, with an enlarged second edition issued in 1932. Both editions included corrections and annotations by Connon. As might be expected of a newspaperman, Wright's style is fragmentary and journalistic, with the emphasis on family histories and lists of names. Like most

of the writers of this period, Wright was obsessed with the first generation of settlers. These traits also characterize his Memories of Mount Forest,which he edited and published in 1928.

Hugh Templin was by far the best stylist of this group of historians. Though he shared most of their conceptions of and attitudes to local history, his book about Fergus, The Story of a Little Town, remains one of the notable achievements of the period. Templin's role as a promoter of Wellington's history cannot be exaggerated. Through the 1920's and 1930's he published articles by Wright, Connon and Dr Byerly that eventually found their way into book form.

The most prolific of the historians of the 1920's and 1930's was Dr A. E. Byerly. Born in Iowa in 1894, he trained in Osteopathy in the United States, and did not move to Canada until 1921, when he set up a practice in Fergus, which he moved to Guelph in 1924. A naturally gifted historian, Dr Byerly was soon an expert on Wellington history and western Ontario history in general. First published by Templin in the Fergus paper, he soon acquired a regional following in the Guelph Mercury and the London Free Press. His major works all appeared between 1930 and 1935: History of Lower Nichol (1930), Fergus, or the Fergusson-Webster Settlement (1934), and The Beginning of Things (1935). There were also a half dozen shorter pamphlets during this period, including a treatment of the McCrae Family of Guelph and two church histories.

Dr Byerly shared with A. W. Wright a concern for accuracy. He not only consulted original sources wherever possible, but also became an obsessive collector of original letters, pamphlets and documents. A small part of his collection survives in the Ontario Archives, but most of it seems to have disappeared. It is a frustrating experience for the contemporary historian to see Byerly make reference to documents that are no longer available.

Stylistically, Dr Byerly was a devoted practitioner of the topical organization of history. It is a style which lends itself admirably to the serial newspaper format in which his books were first published. He saw his role as a compiler and recorder, intruding as little as possible

into his material, and presenting his research without interpretation or commentary.

Interest in local history prompted the organization of the Wellington County Historical Society in 1925 with Roswell Goldie as president, but the organization was able to attract only a dozen members and was dormant by the end of the decade. In 1931 Dr Byerly succeeded in reorganizing the society, serving as secretary and later president. Membership quickly passed 100, and included members of many of the old families of Guelph: names such as Higinbotham, Guthrie, Carter, Hanlon and Orton are scattered through the membership rolls. As well, all the active historians in the county, with the exception of Hugh Templin, supported the society. A. W. Wright and Dr Groves were honorary presidents. This society was oriented strongly toward Guelph. Elora, for example, was represented only by R. E. Mills of the Express and postmaster I.C. Bricker.

In 1934 this society hosted the convention of the Ontario Historical Society. Annual meetings featured papers read by members, and some of these were published in annual reports, which were published in 1933, 34 and 35. The major contributors were Dr Byerly and David Allan.

It is unfortunate that David Allan's published work is so meagre. Scion of the famous Guelph milling and distilling family, his interest in history ran to business subjects and the built environment, a whole new direction for the history written in these years. Like his colleagues, he displays a fetish for names and dates. His article on Guelph mills, for example, outlines the ownership and operation of each company, but does not consider the reasons for the growth and decline locally of this industry which for a time totally dominated the economy of Wellington County.

In the years when the Wellington County Historical Society was sputtering in the late 1920's, another historical group was organized. In 1928 a group of Women's Institute members met at the home of Mrs Samuel Broadfoot and formed the Wellington County Historical Research Society, with Ada Currie as the first president. This group drew its membership from a wider base, generally outside Guelph, though there was some overlap in membership. Mrs T. J. Hannigan served on the executive of both. A. W. Wright,

Hugh Templin and Dr Groves were life members by 1934. The aim was to preserve the remnants and artifacts of the pioneer period. These impulses led eventually into support for the Tweedsmuir History project in the late 1930's, and to the creation of the Wellington County Museum in the early 1950's. The older Historical Society became dormant again after 1936, leaving the field open to the newer Historical Research Society.

By the early 1930's the creation of a new museum and archives was considered vital. The remnants of the old Elora Museum, once the pride of David Boyle, had, since 1895, been moved from one temporary storage area to another in Elora, and had been looted and partially destroyed in the process. In 1932 some space was found at the Ontario Agricultural College.

In the late 1930's the Society presented a total historical experience at its annual meetings, offering not only papers and talks, but also exhibitions of artifacts, tours of the museum collection, demonstrations, and historical plays at an all-day event which attracted up to 500 people to War Memorial Hall in Guelph. The program of 1938 offered Ada Currie's play about William Lyon Mackenzie's alleged hideout in Eramosa. This work was revived in 1988.

The war years brought the end to this lively period of historical activity. The museum collection again went into temporary storage, and many items were lost or disappeared before the new museum was established on Mill Street in Elora. Historical writing virtually ceased. Only two books of note appeared during the next quarter century.

Mabel Dunham's Grand River, published in 1945, shows her to be a prime exponent of the type of history championed by David Boyle. Miss Dunham, a native of Harriston, was the first trained librarian in Ontario, and was associated with the Kitchener Library for most of her career. Fully a third of Grand River is devoted to prehistory and Indians. This book is a slight shift away from a strictly topical organization. The author attempts to show the way individual communities developed, though human activities are dealt with in a separate section. Most significantly, the subject matter is defined by geographic, rather than political boundaries.

Frank Day's Here and There in Eramosa (1953) departs in several ways from earlier writings. Although not a narrative history, the usual list of topics is greatly reduced: Day writes his history from the viewpoints of churches, schools and political development. The principal towns, Rockwood and Everton, are treated in individual chapters, although within these Day reverts to the familiar technique of dealing with organizations and institutions in separate sections. Day interrupts his narrative a number of times to reprint letters and documents in their entirety, but he does offer critical comment on them.

A spinoff of the Canadian Centennial in 1967 was a renewed interest in local history across the country. This year marked a renewal of historical publishing in Wellington County, and several dozen new works have appeared in the past twenty years. In addition, a number of older works have been reprinted. Original editions of Connon, Byerly and Templin had passed the $100 mark at auctions in the 1970's.

Among the first of the new books were Annals of Puslinch, 1950-67, bringing up to date a volume published in 1950, Jean Hutchinson's West Garafraxa Township Centennial History, Historical Sketches of Clifford, 1855-1867, by Georgia Taylor, and The Centennial History of Erin Township.

Over the following decade, histories of most of the municipalities in Wellington County were published. Most were issued to commemorate an anniversary, and most followed a similar format. A brief political history is followed by short sections on each of the schools, churches, industries, cemeteries, and sporting and fraternal organizations. The overall theme is one of slow and steady progress to the present. A township history will have a few paragraphs on each of the hamlets within its boundaries.

Much of our history cannot be captured in this style of writing and organization. A sense of the social volatility and abrupt economic advances and reverses of the nineteenth century cannot be conveyed well. Past controversies and political battles are minimized, if not ignored. And there is usually no sense of context — the way in which the history of the community or municipality is related to changes in the rest of the county, the region and the province.

In spite of these deficiencies, these histories have their merits. They often contain information that is available nowhere else. They are valuable records for the families of people whose achievements are described in them. Modern printing techniques permit the easy reproduction of photographs: many of these books are filled with pictures borrowed from private collections. The most advanced of this style of township history is David Beattie's treatment of Nichol, Pillars and Patches Along the Pathway, which deals with every farm in the township, concession by concession. The immense amount of information in this book will give it its enduring value as a reference work.

The conditions under which many of these books are produced should also be considered. Most are prepared by a committee, on a schedule that allows time for neither intensive research nor studied reflection. A strictly topical organization is suited perfectly for a committee approach.

The picture history is a new format, made possible by advances in offset printing. These can be organized around topical or chronological themes, though there is usually no pretense of telling a story: most people read these by browsing. These are useful in expanding the audience for history, and with intelligent captions they can be very useful works. Donald Coulman's Guelph: Take a Look at Us! (1977) and Main Street: A Pictorial History of Erin Village (1980) are the most successful.

Another innovation of recent years is the oral history. Older Voices Among Us (1981), compiled by Al and Sheila Koop, is the local example. It is only recently that oral history has gained respectability among academic historians. In the hands of a skilled interviewer and editor, this is a technique that can preserve much of the historical record that otherwise would be lost.

The historical collection is an older form that remains a popular one. The usual format is a special edition of a newspaper containing both reprinted historical documents and written articles, the latter often submitted through an appeal to the general public. The special Arthur Entrerprise number of 1908 is an early example; but the classic remains the 1927 Guelph Mercury Centennial Edition, in which the members of the original Wellington County Historical Society played a large role. This is still

one of the basic printed sources for Guelph historians. Art Carr produced a Centennial Edition for Palmerston in 1975, and Bill Doole did the same for Elora with the one shot Sentinel of 1982.

The quality of individual articles in these publications varies greatly, and important subjects may not be treated well or at all due to the way the material is assembled and written. Nevertheless, they do contain useful material, and most importantly, they put the history of their community before a large and general audience.

A variation on this form is Looking Back (1983), edited by Pat Mestern. This lengthy work contains a great deal of documentary material. While the balance of the material leans heavily to family histories, there is a reasonably good balance of subject matter. The quality of this work is enhanced greatly by the supervision of its knowledgeable editor.

Since 1961 the Guelph Historical Society has been publishing annual collections of historical articles. What began as a few mimeographed and stapled sheets has developed into Historic Guelph, one of the province's better annual publications. The Guelph Society's essay contest is a major source of material; other articles have originated in university courses in regional and urban history. The Wellington County Research Society has also sponsored an essay competition for a number of years, but this material has never been put into general circulation.

Genealogy was a popular Victorian pursuit that has recently seen a major revival. Charles Clarke was among the early genealogists of Wellington He spent a great deal of time researching his Lincolnshire ancestors. Henry Wissler, the Elora lawyer and youngest son of Salem's founder, published the Wissler Family Record in 1904. A number of genealogists are currently active in Wellington, and their work has influenced much of the history that has been published over the past two decades. As well, a whole shelf of family histories, dealing mainly or partially with Wellington people, have been printed in the past decade. It is inevitable that some genealogists will become active researchers in the broader aspects of Wellington's history.

The chronological narrative is the most obvious way to write a history. It is remarkable that this form is so rare in Wellington's history. To be done well, it is a form that places major demands on the historian. Firstly, the writer must be familiar with an immense body of factual material. What is used must be selected with care: the historian must decide what is significant and what is trivial, and must attempt to identify historical patterns and to describe the significance of events and personalities. A further difficulty is that of defining the scope of a particular study: municipalities are political units that do not coincide with the way communities in the broader sense were organized. So far, Wellington's historians have been reluctant to tackle these problems head on, preferring to write their history using a form other than the chronological narrative.

Clifford Harrison's Minto uses narrative techniques more successfully than other township histories: the author has attempted to show the way Minto as *a* whole developed over time. This may be our best general township history so far. Leo Johnson's History of Guelph (1977) is the most sustained narrative. This was the sesquicentennial project for the Guelph Historical Society, whose members did much of the actual research. The book does have its flaws: the narrative flow is interrupted too often by lists of names, and often by excessive detail. These, of course, are understandable in a book of this type, which was meant not only to relate a story but to commemorate Guelph's pioneers and to serve as a reference book. Despite the problems, it is in the form of the chronological narrative that Wellington's historical writing will find its maturity: Only in this form can a community and its development be recreated and understood.

There has been no attempt here to mention all the writing dealing with the history of Wellington: the works that are noted are used only to illustrate the point being made. A full Wellington County bibliography is being prepared by the Guelph Regional Group at the University of Guelph. This listing has over 1,300 entries.

The purpose here has been to show how the history of 01 county has been treated by writers and historians over the past 125 years. It is a field that has yet to reach its maturity

Most of us can recall our school experiences, where history was something that happened only in Ottawa or Europe, and involved only wars and politics. Local history, if taught at all, was appended to a geography course. Much has changed in the past decade. Universities are now offering courses in regional, rural and urban history, and this new focus will soon be reflected at all levels of our school systems. There will be a larger number of our local people with skills in the researching and writing of local history, and a larger audience for their work. The superb and growing archival collections of the Wellington County Museum and Archives the Guelph Public Library and the University of Guelph are themselves inducements for historians. The next two decades promise to be stimulating and innovative ones for writing the history of our County.

REVIEWS

Pillars and Patches Along the Pathway: A History of Nichol Township
by David M. Beattie
printed Star and Vidette Printing Ltd., Grand Valley, Ont., 1984, 209 pages. Available from Wellington County Museum and Archives and Nichol Tp. Municipal Office, R.R. 1, Fergus, $18.00.

Beginners in genealogy will welcome *Pillars and Patches.* This local history book includes almost 400 brief family histories, several photographs from private sources, never before printed, and a comprehensive section on the history of Nichol Township school sections.

The chapters and appendix listing the family histories are arranged by concession. Primary sources including census and assessment rolls, newspapers, land abstracts and township minute books are cited as documentation. A. W. Wright's Pioneer Days in Nichol, published in 1932, is cited often as the author's secondary source.

Nichol Township's municipal history is well traced with the inclusion of several interesting references from the township minute books. Elected officials from 1850-1984 are listed in a separate chapter.

The author's quaint and anecdotal style of presentation makes this publication easy to read, and appealing to the general public.

Scholars may wish for a more detailed chronological account of Nichol Township's settlement history, but the book was designed for a general readership interested in the genealogy of Nichol Township's pioneer settlers. The book succeeds in fulfilling this objective.

Pillars and Patches contains a wealth of anecdotal history.

— Bonnie Callen

David Boyle: From Artisan to Archaeologist.
Gerald Killan
(Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1983.)

In this widely acclaimed book, Gerald Killan provides a full-length biography of the man known to most people only through the few words on the historical plaque at the Elora library or the few sentences in Connon's History of Elora.

David Boyle is a man of major significance in the development of scientific research in Canada. As an administrator and field researcher, Boyle almost single-handedly established archaeology in Ontario. The Provincial Museum which he built up eventually formed an important part of the Royal Ontario Museum. His achievements seem all the greater because he was almost entirely self-educated.

The accomplishments of Boyle's later life occupy the major part of the book. Local readers will perhaps be more interested in the first third of this biography, describing Boyle's life as a blacksmith in Eden Mills and school teacher in Pilkington and Elora. Along with Charles Clarke and other prominent residents, Boyle led what Prof. Killan describes as "Elora's Intellectual Awakening." This is the best account we have of the cultural life of an Ontario small town in the 1800's. We hope this book inspires further work on the cultural histories of other communities.

Prof. Killan makes Boyle's impulse for self-improvement and learning the central theme of the biography. Both in Elora and Toronto, Boyle was continually starting and promoting scientific and educational societies. His restless energy propelled him through several career changes, but always — whether as a school principal, book seller, museum curator, historian, editor or field archaeologist — he remained both student and teacher.

Prof. Killan's emphasis on David Boyle's personality makes this book of interest and value to a wide audience, even those with no knowledge of archaeology.

— Steve Thorning

In Flanders Fields: The Story of John McCrae
by John Prescott Boston
Mills Press, 1985, 144 pages.

In Flanders Fields is a memorial to Guelph-born surgeon and poet, Colonel John McCrae. Local residents and avid readers of Canadian military history will relish this new biography.

Prescott traces McCrae's life from his boyhood days in Guelph, through his early medical career in Toronto and Montreal, and culminates in an account of his war service years. The tragic events immediately preceding the writing of his most famous poem is graphically described.

This chronology is documented in hospital records, McGill University archives, journals, and family papers housed in the repositories of the Public Archives and the McCrae Birthplace Museum. Black and white photographs serve to keep his image before the reader. Unfortunately, an index was omitted.

The author has included many examples of McCrae's poetry, leaving the reader with a genuine awareness of the humanist side to Colonel McCrae.

Memorable events in the Boer War and World War One are vividly recounted with a view to acknowledging the heroism of all Canadian soldiers.

Dr. Prescott has succeeded in revealing McCrae's widespread contributions to Canadian life. *In Flanders Fields is* a thoroughly readable biography.

— Bonnie Callen

Projected History of North Wellington.

"OBSERVER" OFFICE, ELORA, Jan., 1866.

MY DEAR SIR, —

I have long been of opinion, that it would be advisable- to take the necessary steps to secure such recollections of the early set- tlement of the North Riding of Wellington, as can be had, only, from the pens and lips of the pioneers who entered our Townships when the first trees were felled.

I first thought of this about three years ago, but circumstances have prevented me giving that attention to the matter which it requires and deserves. It can only be done now by the hearty co-operation and assist- ance of you, and such as you, who saw North Wellington first opened up to cultivation, and I address this circular to you in the hope that you will extend the required help. I shall spare no pains to make the record as complete as possible, so that the future historian of Wellington will be able to gather from it all the data requisite for the work, which, sooner or later, will be undertaken on a much larger scale by one competent to the task.

You will oblige by informing me, per return mail, whether you are willing to give me such information as you may possess, and, if you wish, I will call upon you, at an early day, f.ir the purpose of obtaining it.

Each Township will be treated separately and fully. Incidents which appear trilling and of little moment to the individual, are interesting to many a fire-side when reproduced in print, and have a value in the future which, to the narrator, at the present time, they may not appear to possess,

I shall be anxious to give due credit to all to whom I may be indebt- ed, for material, unless it is the expressed desire of my contributors and informants that I should suppress their names.

If you agree to help me, I hope that you will not omit mention of the many little events which go to make up the full narrative of "men and things" as they were in this locality n score years ago or less. The first point, however, at which I aim, is the earnest co-operation of the pioneers in the wilderness, and I earnestly desire you to accede to my request An early answer in the affirmative will confer a favor, not only upon myself, but the many readers of the "OBSERVER" who will peruse the projected history of our noble Riding.

I am, Dear Sir,

Yours faithfully,

J. M. SHAW,

Editor and Proprietor Elora "Observer."

Report From The Archives

by Bonnie Callen

The archival collection of the Wellington County Museum and Archives consists of rare, historical records which document the history of Wellington County, and its twenty-one municipalities from their first settlement.

The Archives is a division of the Wellington County Museum, which was established in Elora in 1954 by the Wellington County Historical Research Society. In 1957 the museum building and contents were sold to the County of Wellington, although strong ties of co-operation remain. In 1974 the collection moved to the former Wellington County Home for Aged between Fergus and Elora. This century stone building was built in 1877 as the Wellington County House of Industry and Refuge, designed to house the poor and the homeless. In 1986 the building underwent an extensive renovation and expansion project. The Archives is now housed in a spacious wing on the second floor.

Researchers include professional genealogists, family tree buffs, university and secondary school students, professors and teachers of local history.

The record collection consists of over 9000 photographs of people and places, over 600 maps and plans, manuscripts, diaries, business records, club records, church registers, over 1000 published books including local histories, atlases and directories, scrapbooks, postcards, census returns, land abstracts and early deeds, wills 1840-1901, cemetery transcriptions, slides, oral histories, vertical files, family histories and 600 reels of microfilm.

SPECIAL COLLECTIONS:

The Wellington County Archives is the designated repository for the MUNICIPAL RECORDS generated by

the town, township, village and county councils including minute books, bylaws, assessment and collectors rolls, voters lists, and cashbooks.

The COULING COLLECTION contains architectural inventories, photographs, and thousands of slides of significant architectural structures in Guelph and Wellington County. The collection was created by the late Professor Gordon Couling, a noted scholar of architectural history, who devoted many years to documenting the architectural styles prevalent in this area. The collection is of particular interest to students of architectural history and members of local heritage groups. The Archives holds the following NEWSPAPER COLLECTIONS:

Guelph	1847-1856
Elora	1852-1972
Fergus	1854-present
Arthur	1896-present
Drayton	1892-present
Mount Forest	1870-1918, 1974-present
Erin	1974-present
Harriston	1974-present
Clifford	1974-present
Palmerston	1974-present

The Women's Institute TWEEDSMUIR HISTORY COLLECTION consists of scrapbooks depicting the history of the local community through the medium of photographs, newspaper clippings, farm histories and genealogies. The Archives holds microfilm copies of the Tweedsmuir Histories for Arkell, Badenock, Belwood, Brock Road, Cumnock, Carry-on, Elora, Ennotville, Farewell, Living Springs, Fergus, Alma, Mosborough, Mimosa, Eramosa, Little Ireland, Hillsburgh, Northgate, Royal, Speedside and West End institutes.

RECENT ACQUISITIONS:

The Archives acquired a large collection of late nineteenth and early twentieth century legal records generated by barristers John A. Wilson, Allan Wilson, and J. D. Wilson, who practised law in Fergus.

For those interested in business records, the Yeomans Collection should prove to be a valuable source. The

Yeomans collection contains correspondence, account books, prescription books, and invoices kept by Mount Forest chemists, Lawrence, Horace and W. H., Yeomans dating from the 1860's to the 1940's.

A collection of church records from St. Paul's, West Garafraxa Township was recently copied and deposited.

PUBLICATIONS:

1. Local History Sources at Wellington County Archives
2. Guidelines for Compiling House Logs
3. How Old Is My House?
4. Marriage Register, Rev. Hugh Reid 1858-1878
5. Marriage Register, Rev. James Black 1828-1842
6. Genealogy Files
7. Guide to Newspaper Collection
8. Guide to Local History Book Collection
9. Guide to Directories

GENEALOGY/LOCAL HISTORY FAIR

Each October, the Wellington County Museum and Archives hosts its Genealogy/Local History Fair featuring guest speakers, sales tables sponsored by book dealers and publishing companies, and historical and genealogical displays.

Wellington County Museum and Archives
R.R. #1 Fergus, Ontario N1M 2W3
Hours: Monday-Friday 9:30 - 12:00
1:00- 4:30
Appointments Recommended.

Contributors

Eric Griffin is an Anglican minister and rector of Grace Church in Arthur.

Patricia McGoldrick Goldberg was formerly a librarian at the Ontario Veterinary College. She and her husband are currently raising a family in Kitchener.

Arthur Carr of Palmerston is well known across Ontario as a newspaperman and broadcaster. He was editor and publisher of the *Palmerston Observer* from 1934 until 1978.

Otto Bouwman is a native of Nichol Township. He is a graduate of the University of Guelph and a teacher.

Steve Thorning of Elora is presently completing a Ph.D. in business history at McMaster.

Bonnie Callen, a resident of Puslinch Township, grew up in Elora. She has been Archivist at the Wellington County Museum and Archives for the past seven years.

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