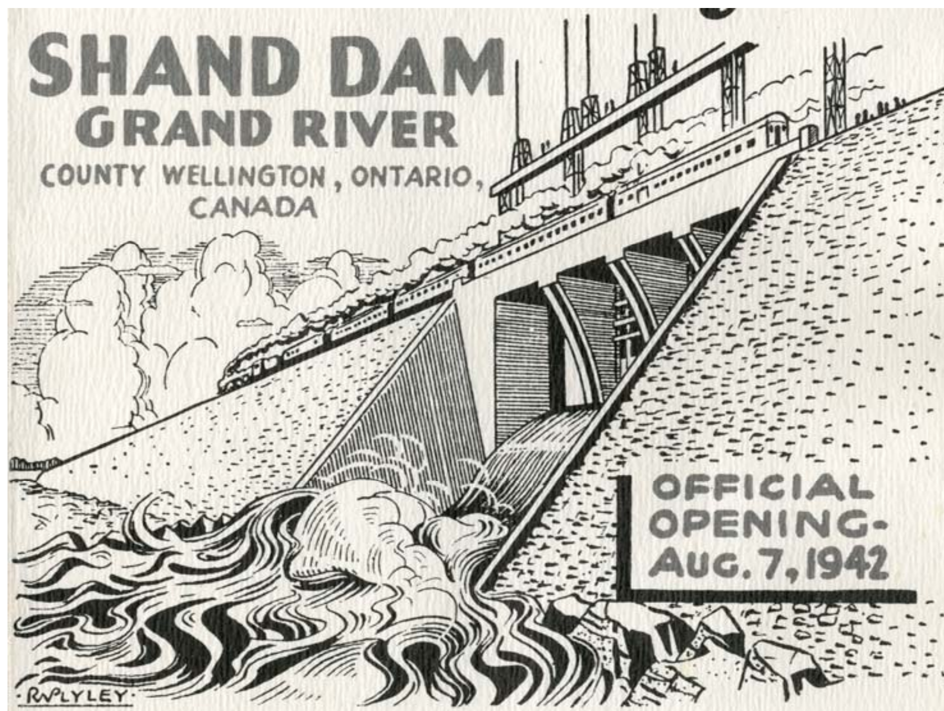
Wellington County History



SHAND DAM • G.R.C.A.
JOHN SMITHURST
-FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE
SCOTS IMMIGRATION TO CRIEFF

Volume 5 • 1992

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WELLINGTON COUNTY

HISTORY

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TO OUR READERS

In a perhaps unexpected way, this issue of *Wellington County History,* with major articles on the history and construction of the Shand Dam, has a complementary relationship to the preceding volume, which dealt with the era of railway building in Wellington County. This was also an era of intensive industrial development and exploitation of our natural resources, during which little attention was given to the environmental consequences of these activities. In his article "Development and the Upper Grand before 1938", Stephen Thorning gives a graphic picture of the spoliation of the Grand, and traces the beginnings of public awareness, in the early part of the present century, of the need to take remedial action. In the two following articles, Peter Templin outlines the events between the decision to build the dam and the opening ceremony on August 7, 1942, and gives us a view of the construction process from an unusual perspective: that of a fifteen-year-old water boy.

In the second of two articles on the subject (the first appeared in Volume 1 of this journal), Rev. Eric Griffin concludes a definitive examination of the legendary romance between Florence Nightingale and Rev. John Smithurst of Elora. A legend of a very different sort, a black sooth-sayer who lived in Pilkington Township, is the subject of a short article by Rev. Donna Mann. The last of our major articles is a study of the Scots in Puslinch by Mark Spencer, based heavily on the now-published *Matthew McPhatter Letters,* which are reviewed in our Book Review section. This along with Reports from the Archives, concludes this issue of *Wellington County History.*

In this issue we have covered more than the usual diversity of topics. We hope our readers will find all of them interesting.

THE SHAND DAM: FIFTY YEARS ON THE GRAND

by Ralph Beaumont

The year 1992 marks the 50th anniversary of a significant event in the Grand River valley: the Official Opening on August 7, 1942, of the Shand Dam, some three miles east of Fergus.

At 170 miles in length, the Grand is the largest river system in Southern Ontario, and it is inevitable that a river this large should play a vital role in the lives of local residents. It is equally inevitable that the Grand, and the first reservoir constructed to manage its sometimes raging waters, should provide an interesting history.

Constructed as an earthen dam with a central concrete spillway, the Shand Dam is about 640 metres (2,100 feet) in length and rises 23 metres (75 feet) from the riverbed to the top of the main deck. The central spillway is 117 metres (386 feet) wide at the base of the two large concrete wing walls which hold back the earth-fill portions at each end of the structure.

Water can be discharged in two different ways. The most visible and dramatic is when one or more of the four main gates are opened, usually during the high-flow period in the spring. For "low-flow augmentation" during the dry months of summer, a more precise way to release the water is through the "low-flow discharge tubes". The dam has three of these tubes, two of which are 48 inches in diameter, and the other, 60 inches. The tubes contain valves, resembling stove-pipe dampers, which provide an accurate means of regulating the flow.

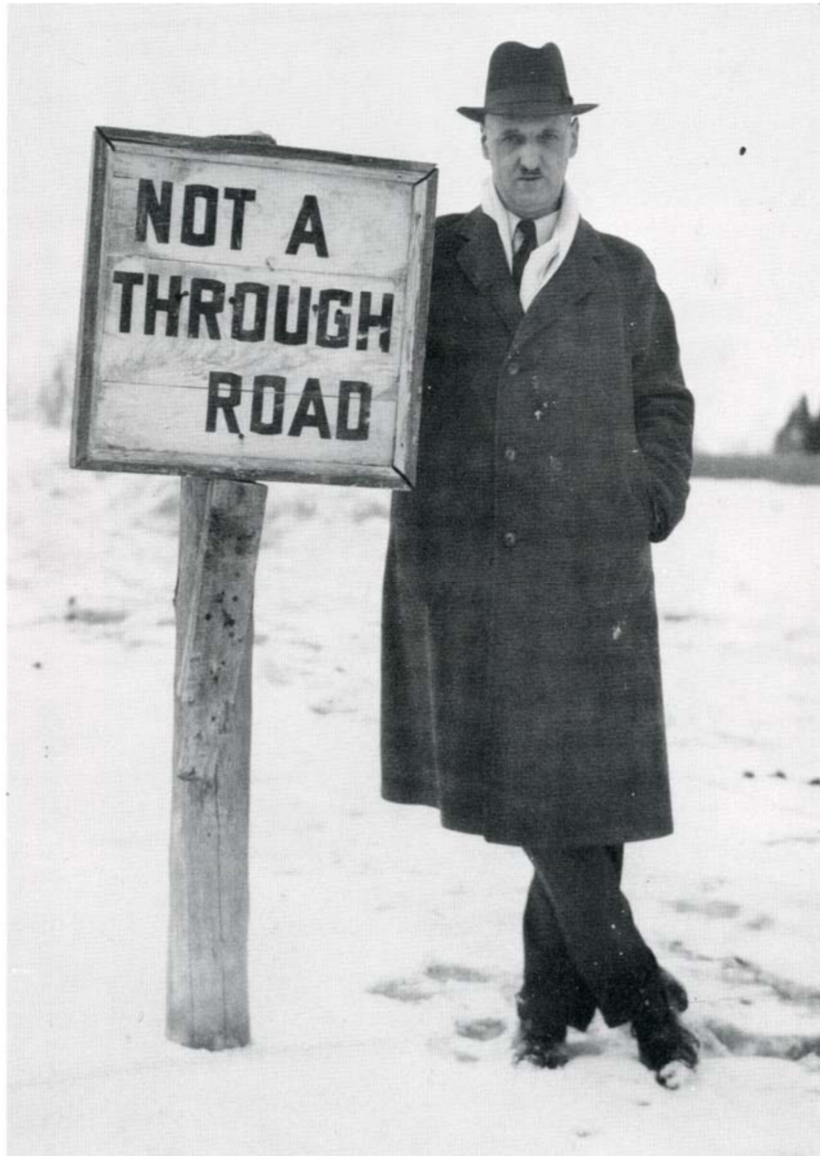
As to the reservoir itself, Lake Belwood is 12 kilometres (7.5 miles) in length, and, in engineering terms, has a storage capacity of 64 million cubic metres or roughly 51,783 acre feet. In layman's language, this represents about 21.5 billion gallons of water.

The most recent development at the dam—the installation of an electric power generating system—has an ironic aspect. Back in 1912,

Ontario Hydro surveyed the Grand River valley and concluded that the water flow was too sporadic to make hydro generation feasible. By the 1980s, however, energy costs had risen to a point where it became economically sensible for the GRCA to install a turbine and generator in one of the 48-inch low-flow discharge tubes. Completed in 1989, this system provides enough power to supply the energy needs of about 500 homes. A small amount of the power produced is used internally within the dam and the Belwood Lake conservation area but most of it is sold to Ontario Hydro. There is also a touch of irony in the fact that the cost of this long-delayed development was approximately 60% of the original cost of the entire dam!

When the Shand Dam was first constructed, optimistic newspaper headlines proclaimed that floods and droughts would never again be seen along the Grand River system. Experience has proven, however, that one dam, or even a series of dams, will never be a total guarantee against such occurrences. Mother Nature is not that agreeable. Nevertheless, the Shand Dam has paid for itself many times over by preventing floods or lessening their severity. Even more importantly, if less spectacularly, it performs its valuable work of maintaining river flow during the dry months of summer. No longer does the Grand shrink to a puny trickle, even in the driest of summers.

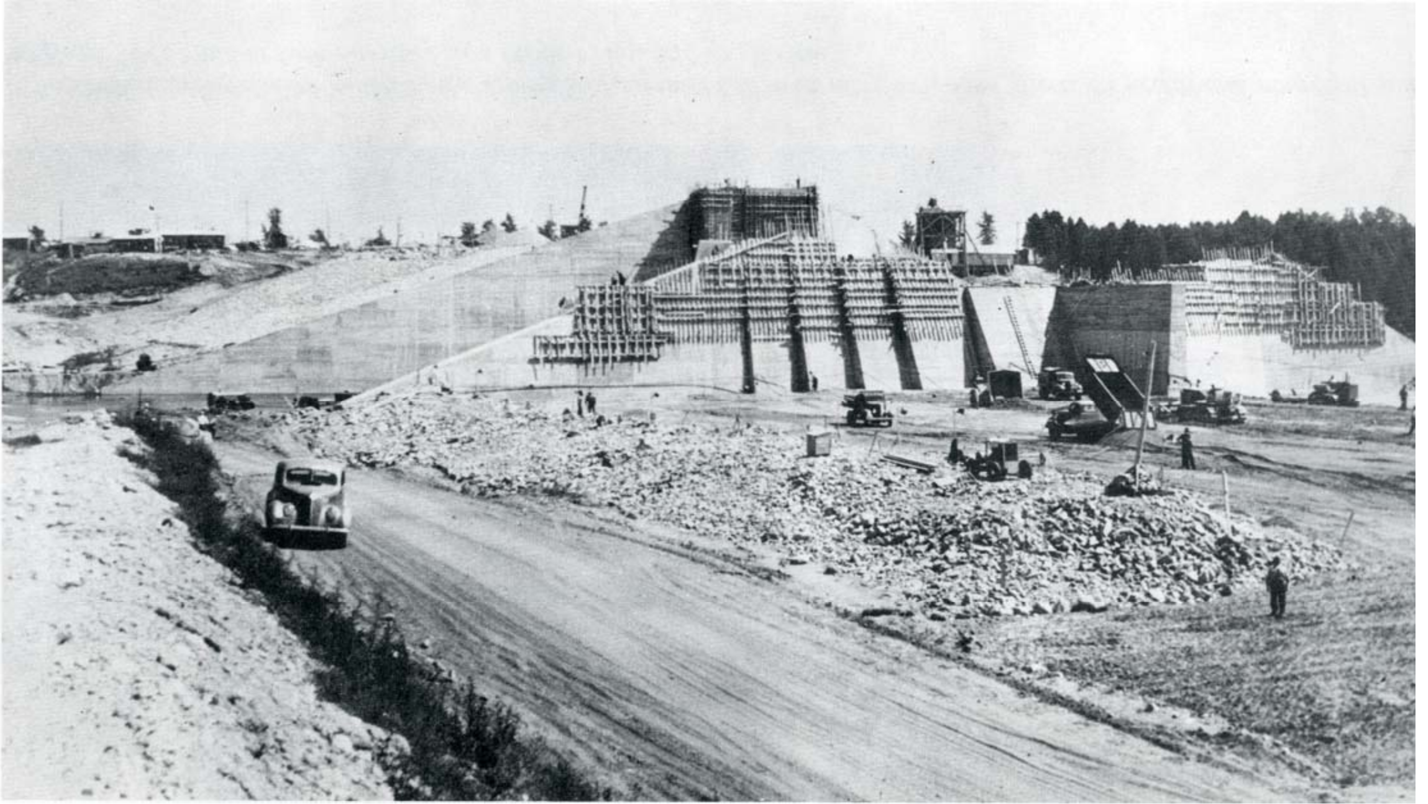
For residents of the valley, the Shand Dam often goes unnoticed and unrecognized, perhaps thought of only as a place to go boating, water skiing, fishing or swimming on a hot summer day. But it is this reservoir, the first built in Canada solely for water conservation purposes, that has provided so much environmental benefit over the past fifty years.



Hugh Templin, editor of the Fergus News-Record, *was an ardent and effective proponent of the dam, and sat on its Board of Commissioners. In this photograph, he is standing near the site of the Shand Dam before construction operations began.*

Spring flooding used to be an annual occurrence for communities along the Grand River. Motorists bravely cross the appropriately named Water Street in downtown Galt in the spring of 1929.

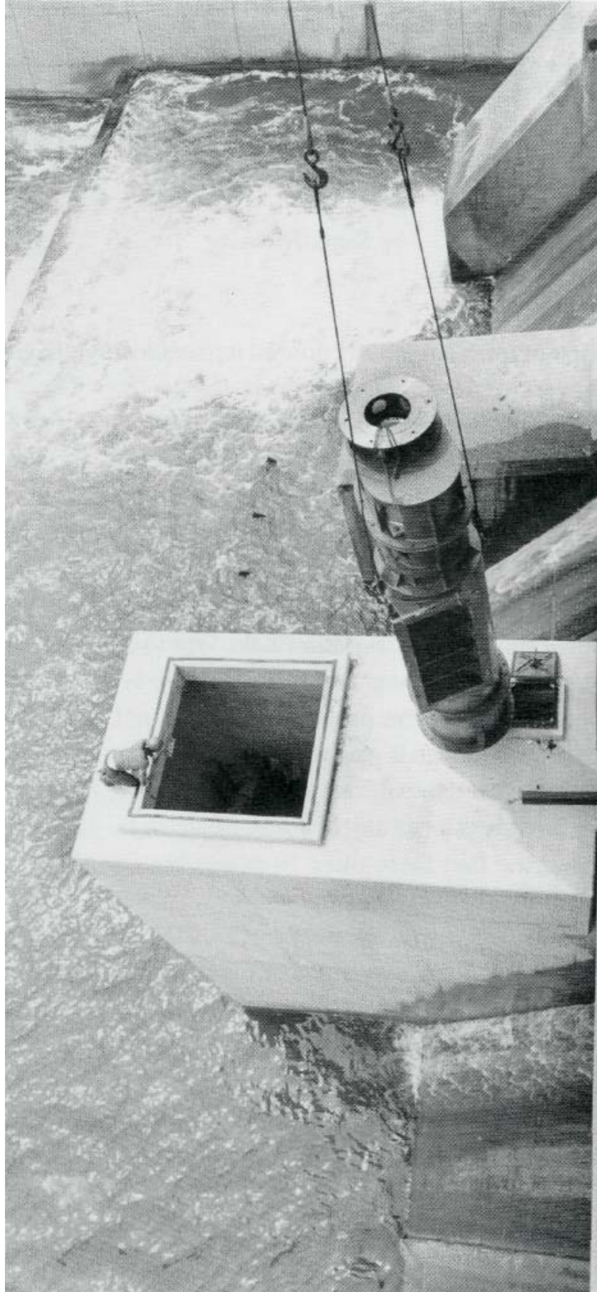
If floods were an immediate problem, the droughts of summer had even more long-term effects on health and municipal water supplies. The Grand in Gait has dried to a trickle in this mid-1930s view.



Construction of the Shand Dam was well under way in this August 1940 photo.

A modem aerial view of the Shand Dam, taken during the late summer when the lake level has been reduced to keep the Grand River flowing downstream.

Close-up of the Shand Dam during construction of the hydro generating unit. Water is being released from one of the main gates, as well as the left 48" low flow discharge tube. The main 60" discharge tube in the middle of the spillway is closed, while the hydro generating station is being constructed over the right 48" discharge tube.



Lowering the hydro generating turbine into position at the Shand Dam.

DEVELOPMENT AND THE UPPER GRAND RIVER BEFORE 1938

by Steve Thorning

When the first permanent settlers poured into central Wellington County in the 1830s, the chief attraction of the area was the Grand River. Portions of the river and its surroundings appealed to the romanticized view of nature embraced by most early Victorians, but it was the water power potential of the river that made the Grand Valley attractive for settlement and investment In succeeding decades, romanticism receded, and unfettered economic considerations dominated the use of the river. It was a policy totally incompatible with the notions of natural beauty held by the first arrivals. Environmental deterioration in the Grand valley was recognized early in the process, but it was not until the early twentieth century that the public began to take the problem seriously, and to try to reconcile the various uses and demands placed on the river. Not until the late 1930s, when the situation had reached crisis proportions, did the public and political bodies unite to correct a century of abuse of the river. The 1867 Ontario Directory reported that there were 18 power sites on the Grand River and its tributaries within three miles of Elora. Some of these sites were too small to be developed, but the major ones, in Fergus, Elora and Salem, provided the energy for a series of mills and factories along the banks of the Grand and Irvine Rivers. Sages of the time predicted that the ample water power would lead to the eventual union of the three settlements. Ambitious promoters in the 1850s believed the upper Grand Valley had the potential to become one of Canada's first major industrial locations, similar to those already existing along the Lachine Canal in Montreal and Spencer Creek at Dundas. These promoters and speculators laid out contiguous townsites from Glen Lamond, on the eastern side of Fergus, through Kinnettles, Aboyne, Elora and Salem. In addition, other townsites were surveyed at Inverhaugh and Winterbourne. Had all these lots been sold and built on and the water power fully developed, this small stretch

of the Grand River would have held a population of over 50,000, most employed in mills and factories.

Few of the developers realized anything close to their ambitions along the upper Grand; in fact, most lost their shirts. Changing technology caught up early with the power development of the Grand River. What had seemed an immense power potential in the 1840s was, only 25 years later, rather modest Newer factories began to rely on the flexibility available with steam power. Siting a factory on a river restricted the potential for expansion the water power at each site was finite; steam generating facilities could be enlarged whenever necessary.

There was also the problem of reliability. Water flows could and did fluctuate seasonally, and there was always a problem in preventing freeze-ups of the water flow in winter. Floods often caused damage to generating equipment, and sometimes to other parts of the factory.

Spring floods had occurred regularly, though of less intensity, for centuries before there was appreciable human activity in the upper Grand River valley. The first power development in the area, Roswell Matthews modest dam and mill at the future site of Elora in 1818, required extensive annual repairs for three years. Matthews then abandoned the site for a more docile one on Swan Creek, a minor tributary of the Grand below Elora. For similar reasons, George Elmslie of Bon Accord moved his sawmill from the Irvine to a small tributary creek in the early 1840s.

Seasonal fluctuations in water volumes intensified in the 1840s and 1850s, and the link with the clearing of land and the draining of swamps was generally recognized. In the fall of 1856 low water shut down the mills in Fergus and Elora, and mill owners began to complain that water power was becoming unreliable[1].

By this time there were a number of dams on the upper Grand—two in Elora, three in Fergus, and at one at each of Aboyne and Belwood. These, of course, did little to regulate the flow of the river; they merely provided small reservoirs for turbines at individual power sites. These dams were the source of conflict with another class of river users: the lumbermen. The Grand River became a transportation route in a major way in 1862, when a sawmill operator in Gait purchased logs in Garafraxa and floated them downstream in rafts[2]. By law, the dam owners were required to provide slides to allow the timber to proceed downstream. The following year the lumbermen heightened the dam at the Elora mill

to prevent their logs from becoming stranded on sandbars upstream. This, coupled with an unusually heavy spring flood in 1864, produced the first major flooding of buildings in Elora[3].

Despite their efforts to maintain a transportation route on the Grand River, the lumbermen lost a considerable number of their logs. Logs washed ashore on the banks of the river; others became ensnared in tree stumps and brush, and all manner of refuse that had been tossed into the river. When Udney Richardson opened up and cleaned out the upper dam at Elora in 1899, he recovered over 400 logs, some of which he believed were over 25 years old[4].

In truth, the Grand River by the 1860s had become an open sewer after only three decades of human activity. A.D. Ferrier, writing in 1865, recalled a trip to Elora in 1835, and the state of the river 30 years later:

We breakfasted at Elora, and indeed saw the trout caught that formed the best part of our breakfast. The trout fishing in those days and for many years after, at Elora, was very good indeed; but now alas improvements—that is sawdust, meal sids[5], dye water and other nuisances—have driven away the trout, and none but the most determined sportsman thinks of trying the "Grand below Elora", as it used to be, for a day's fishing[6].

During the 1860s and 1870s, the notion that the Grand River and its surrounding environment were nothing more than exploitable resources was universally accepted. Conflicts over the use of the river arose between competing groups of users, rather than between exploiters and conservationists. In 1870, for example, logs floated from Garafraxa to Potter's sawmill in Elora destroyed two or three bridges, and made sad work of the mills on the route. By this time, some of the lumbermen had become concerned that erratic water levels would soon drive the timber to the railways[7]. Concerns were raised over the rapid depletion of the forests in the Grand River basin, but only because the price of lumber would rise[8].

By 1881 only about 12% of the land in Nichol and Pilkington Townships was still covered by timber. The proportion in the upper townships of the watershed, Garafraxa, Luther and Amaranth, was larger, but much of the better timber, particularly the pine, had already been

Competing uses: Elora's millers and factory owners maintained this timber slide in the 1860s to allow lumbermen to float their logs from Garafraxa and Luther Townships to sawmills in Gait.

taken out[9]. Still, timbering continued on a reduced scale for another 30 years.

The loss of the forests was not in itself totally responsible for the spring floods and summer droughts. After removing the timber, settlers in Luther and Amaranth began to drain swamps and wetlands. Fires, some set deliberately and others spreading accidentally from piles of brush, burned off the peat and organic matter that once covered much of the area. Some parts of these townships were lowered several feet by the fires, which would often smoulder all winter beneath the snow and flare up again in the spring. At times, clouds of smoke hung over much of the north of Wellington County, turning the sky a greenish brown and forcing residents to light their lamps in the daytime[10]. The wetlands had served as giant sponges, holding water in the spring and releasing it slowly over the summer. Spring floods increased in their intensity through the 1880s and 1890s. Aggravating the problem was the introduction of field drainage. This was a novelty in 1880, but became more common in the next two decades. The result was a more intense spring runoff each year, and substantial increases in water flow after summer rainstorms.

Old Aboyne: The power potential of the Grand River was the reason for the proposed village of Aboyne. A mill, dam and bridge were built, but the village never amounted to more than a small hamlet This view, showing the bridge and dam, illustrates the cavalier attitude toward the river prevalent in the nineteenth century: rotting stumps on the bank, refuse dumped along the shore, and floating debris caught on the top of the dam.

Increasingly, the river became a repository for anything that could not be disposed of conveniently by other methods. Distilleries were located on the banks of the river at Elora and Fergus; these fed their spent mash to cattle in adjoining feedlots, and rains then washed the manure into the river. Bakers in Elora and Fergus dumped their stale bread into the water, and butchers used the same method for tainted meat and rancid fat. As well, there were the various by-products of the factories: dyes, chemicals, scrap and garbage. The Irvine River at Elora served for a time as a dump for household garbage, ashes, and even dead livestock. Most of the time, all this refuse quickly floated downstream, but in summer, when the water behind the dams became stagnant, the Grand River became a series of bubbling cesspools. In most years, epidemics of unidentified fevers swept through Elora and Fergus. John Smith of the Elora Observer noted that some residents attributed the mysterious fevers to the polluted river, but his theory was that bad well-water was responsible:

> ....there has been more ill-health here than has been usual for several summers. Some attribute it to the exhalations of the mill pond, but notwithstanding the systematic manner in which filth is there deposited, we cannot suppose it proceeds from that source, seeing the wet season we have had prevented the water being as low as usual[11].

The effects of the desecration of the Grand River above Fergus were less pronounced, but only because the villages of Belwood and Grand Valley were smaller than Elora and Fergus. Farmers also contributed to the problem: some old photographs show that unsound agricultural practices resulted in erosion along or near the river.

We have no precise information about the impact of change in the upper Grand valley on wildlife, either plants or animals. No one attempted surveys or inventories of wildlife, and there was not even agreement on the names of individual species[12]. The anecdotal evidence that does survive suggests that many species became extinct or severely depleted. Very few people saw any benefit whatever to what is now termed a diverse eco-system. When Col. Charles Clarke delivered a talk on the value of birds in 1875, his approach was very much a novelty[13], though the value of birds and their habitats to agriculture, and conservation practices in general, were being recognized in some quarters by this time[14]. It was

not until the early twentieth century that serious students began to examine the subject[15]. By this time the damage had been done.

To the modern observer, the general acceptance of the destruction of the Grand River watershed in the 1860s and 1870s was remarkable. The few who raised questions and doubts about the quality of progress, such as A.D. Ferrier and Charles Clarke, were very much the exception. The destruction did not seem to impair the appreciation of the river, and particularly the Elora Gorge, as outstanding examples of natural beauty. "The 'Falls' are remarkable for their beauty," noted the Wellington County directory of 1867. "....beautifully situated near the junction of the Grand and Irvine Rivers," stated the 1869 Ontario directory. The popular mind of the time did not see a mill or factory as a blight at the edge of the river, but as a symbol of material and moral progress.

Though severely blemished, the scenery along the upper Grand River remained sufficiently attractive to late Victorian Ontario residents that a tourist business began to appear. Elora and Fergus boosters began to see a business potential when trainloads of excursionists visited the villages in the 1880 era. With the gorge as its principal natural asset, Elora had the most to gain from this traffic. A succession of volunteer improvement committees succeeded in the early 1880s in cleaning the garbage from the Irvine River and in constructing wooden steps into the gorge and a footbridge across the stream. Surprisingly, this was the first time that the junction of the Grand and Irvine was readily accessible. Some of these improvements suffered annual damage from flooding, and the volunteer workers had difficulty in maintaining their enthusiasm[16].

The concentration of attention on the Elora gorge, and on a few other locations upstream, allowed the public to ignore the larger issues of water conservation and environmental degradation. Stretches of the gorge appeared to be unsullied by human intervention. The public perception of the gorge perpetuated a romanticized view of nature, and fanciful notions of the Indian cultures that visitors liked to imagine once inhabited the area. Elora photographer John Connon built a solid business by photographing well-dressed tourists against the backdrop of the rocks, and by selling his well-executed landscape photographs of the gorge.

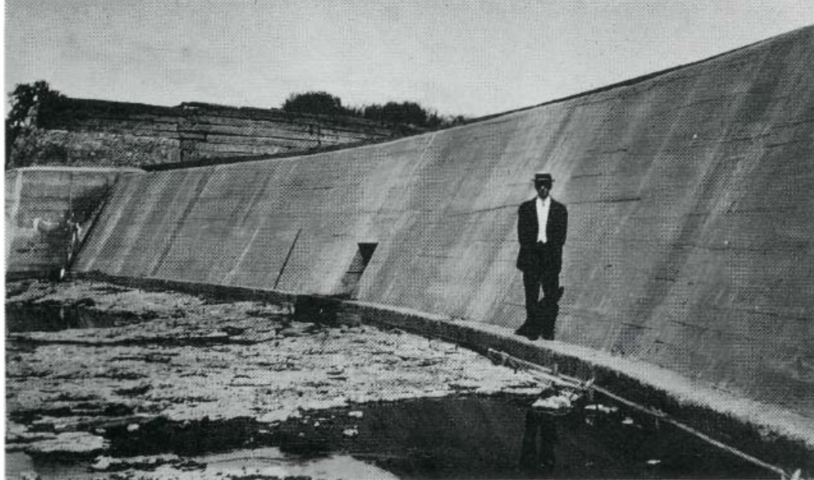
The business leaders of Fergus and Elora persisted in promoting the advantages of the water power of the Grand River until early in the twentieth century. In fact, the river had become an unreliable source of

power. By 1890, all major users, with the exception of the Elora Mill, had installed auxiliary steam power[17]. Most riverside industrial sites had become inconvenient for transportation, and too confined for building purposes. Beany Brothers in Fergus and T.E. Bissell in Elora both expanded riverside industrial facilities after 1900, but this was done to retain existing buildings as much as to take advantage of water power. Both towns fared poorly in competition with other municipalities in the Grand River watershed, such as Guelph, Kitchener, Gait and Brantford, all of which built large industrial bases in the late nineteenth century with little, if any, reliance on water power.

Riverfront industrial buildings faced annual peril in the form of ice jams and rising water. Through the 1880s and 1890s most proprietors undertook measures to strengthen walls and clean out the riverbed. Major problems did not occur until 1898 and 1899. High water in these years set new records. Ice jams caused the severest problems. Monkland Mills in Fergus suffered damage from rising water in both years, as did the carpet factory in Elora. The 1899 flood was the most severe. It damaged the power generation facilities at all the Elora industrial sites, as well as at McGowan's flax mill at Aboyne. At the carpet factory, a large quantity of wool floated away, and all the dyes and chemicals were washed out of the dye house. Water at this location, which is now Bissell Park in Elora, rose ten feet above ground level, and more than fifteen feet above the normal level of the river[18]. The firm never reopened after the 1899 flood[19].

The causes of the water problems were understood by everyone by 1900, but no serious effort was made to try to rectify the situation. Newspaper editorialists and a few scientists proposed grandiose schemes, but there was no hope of financing any of them. The provincial government remained indifferent, and the numerous jurisdictions and municipalities were disinclined to cooperate. Meanwhile, the chopping of what remained of the forest and the draining and burning of swamps continued.

Notwithstanding the flood damage, interest in water power enjoyed a revival in the 1890s, as a result of the introduction of electric lighting. Factories and mills in Elora and Fergus found it convenient to install electric generating systems powered by water, and independent of the main steam-powered source of energy. As in other places, textile plants were among the earliest converts. Electric light allowed night shifts to work efficiently, and provided superior illumination for weaving and sewing operations.



Electrical power on the Grand: T.E. Bissell built this poured concrete dam in 1909 to provide power for new electrical generating equipment in his factory.

Electric light also provided advantages in working with coloured fabrics and dyes. In the mid 1890s, both Wilson's Woolen Mill in Fergus and the Elora Carpet factory installed electric plants[20]. When he acquired the old carpet factory for his farm implement plant, T.E. Bissell retained the electric system. He rebuilt and expanded it in 1909, when he constructed a new poured-concrete dam, solely to provide water power for a electrical generator.

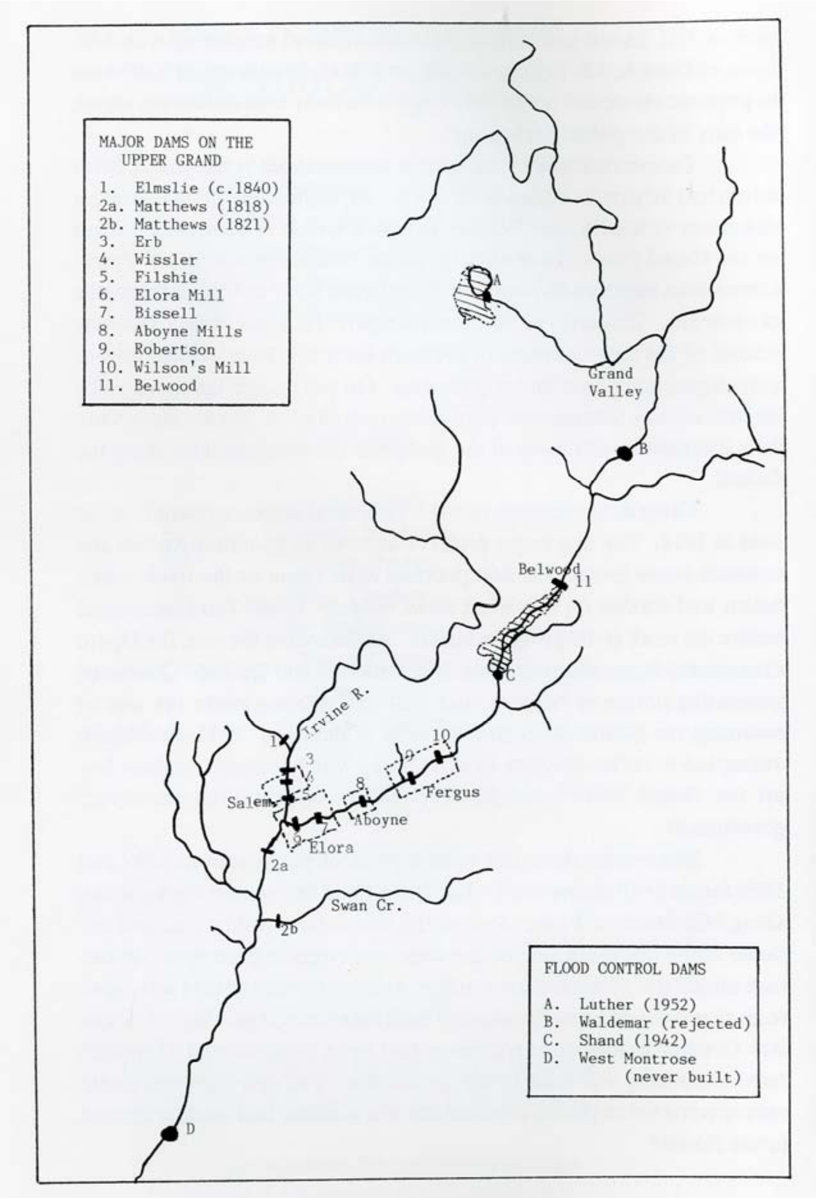
A profound change in thinking regarding the Grand River occurred in the years after 1910. The potential of the river as a source of electrical power was the major factor in the numerous proposals advanced by various municipal and business leaders, but other forces were at work as well. The need for conservation and reforestation was becoming accepted in the public mind. There was a recognition that a series of large reservoirs, built to supply electric generating stations, could also generate other benefits: raising the water table, providing parkland and promoting tourism. Some promoters predicted that electric railways, with rapid, frequent service, could bring the benefits of nature within easy access of city residents. Electric railway lines to Elora, Fergus, Arthur and Orangeville, using power generated on the Grand River, had been proposed as early as 1892. The projects planned after 1910 seemed more serious, and when businessmen

such as T.E. Bissell and John C. Mundell of Elora teamed up with J.W. Lyon of Guelph, J.P. Jaffray of Gait, and W.H. Breithaupt of Kitchener to promote them, and when the People's Railway sent out survey crews, the ears of the public perked up[21].

Cooperation among the various municipalities in the Grand River watershed began to coalesce in 1912. In September of that year, a delegation visited Premier Whitney to urge a system of conservation dams on the Grand River. Concurrently, Adam Beck's Hydro-Electric Power Commission began an investigation of the Grand River as a potential source of electricity. The survey of the Grand was part of a larger project, involving several of the major streams of southern Ontario[22]. Beck's objective was to both generate power and stop flooding. His pet project, the hydro-radial electric railway scheme, was part of the overall plan. Beck's ideas were fully compatible with those of the leaders in the municipalities along the Grand.

Using data compiled in 1912, provincial surveyors went into the field in 1914. The first major project was to be an 85-foot-high dam and reservoir below Elora. The next priorities were a dam on the Irvine above Salem, and another on the Grand above Fergus[23]. World War I intervened before the work could progress further. At the end of the war, the Hydro Commission began diverting most of its resources into the huge Queenston generating station at Niagara, and post-war inflation made the cost of resuming the Grand River development prohibitive. W.H. Breithaupt attempted to revive the plan in 1920, along with his electric railway line up the Grand River[24], but he received no support from the Drury government.

Meanwhile, there had been repeats of the disastrous 1898 and 1899 floods in 1913 and 1917. The latter flood devastated the buildings along Mill Street in Elora. Part of the lower dam washed out, and the flume along the south side of the river was virtually destroyed. Water rose above the Victoria Street bridge, and for several hours there were fears that it would be swept away. The flood occurred on Mar. 25; it was late October before all the damage had been repaired and Mundell's furniture factory was back in full production. The new dam and flume were constructed of poured concrete and to a standard that would withstand future floods[25].

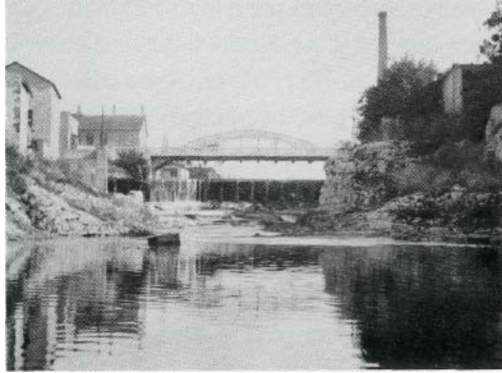

MAJOR DAMS ON THE UPPER GRAND
1. Elmslie (c.1840)
2a. Matthews (1818)
2b. Matthews (1821)
3. Erb
4. Wissler
5. Filshie
6. Elora Mill
7. Bissell
8. Aboyne Mills
9. Robertson
10. Wilson's Mill
11. Belwood
FLOOD CONTROL DAMS
A. Luther (1952)
B. Waldemar (rejected)
C. Shand (1942)
D. West Montrose (never built)
Grand Valley
Belwood
Irvine R.
Salem
Elora
Aboyne
Fergus
Swan Cr.

Public support for conservation grew markedly in the 1920s. There were proposals to include the upper Grand valley in the expanding provincial parks system with a large park and bird sanctuary between Elora and West Montrose, occupying the central portion of Pilkington Township. Tree cutting in the upper reaches of the Grand watershed continued in the early 1920s, but was drawing increasing criticism. Some conservationists declared that this area should never have been cleared of any trees[26].

The municipal cooperation that had characterized the 1910 era revived in the late 1920s. This time, much of the leadership came from the cities and towns in the middle and lower Grand valley, particularly Kitchener, Gait and Brantford. Not only did these towns suffer greatly from floods (Brantford spent over $325,000 on dikes along the river in the early 1920s); they also experienced problems with low water in summer. Sewage systems in the major towns depended on the Grand River to dilute their discharge[27]. During summer droughts, the Grand River below Gait, and often below Fergus as well, was literally an open sewer.

The municipalities in the watershed organized as the Grand River Valley Board of Trade in 1929. Their objectives, in forming this body, included a full range of economic and conservation measures: flood control, economic development, power generation, tourism, and reforestation. Under the leadership of Gordon Cockshutt of Brantford, the Board, in essence, revived the Ontario Hydro plans of 1914. Ontario Hydro cooperated on a new survey and assessment, the cost of which was shared by the participating municipalities. The preliminary report, released in March, 1932, called for major dams on the Grand in Pilkington, and Garafraxa Townships, and two more on the Conestoga. The objective was to maintain a minimum flow of 350 cubic feet per second at Gait. The dam below Elora was to be the major one, with a hefty price-tag of $1,500,000 in depression-era money[28].

The projected dam below Elora had the advantage of taming the flow from the Irvine, but the high cost, and engineering difficulties due to the gravelly soil conditions, led to the reclassification of the Garafraxa and Luther dams as the first priorities. Early in 1934, plans were completed for the projected Waldemar Dam and a four-mile-long lake, immediately upstream from Behvood. But before construction could begin, the coalition of municipalities broke down amid squabbling over plans and costs. Municipalities in the upper valley complained that they would be paying



Low water: During the summer of 1936, the Grand River virtually dried up completely above Fergus; in town, the flow was negligible. This view looks upstream to the lower dam and the St. David Street bridge. The remnants of Robertson's Mills are on the left, and the Beatty plant is on the right.

Six months later (February, 1937) record-breaking floods swept down the Grand, The dam is almost obscured by ice and water in this view. The water level is over 10 feet higher than the previous summer's, and it's moving fast!

for benefits enjoyed largely downstream. Others denounced the whole scheme as entirely experimental and prohibitively expensive. Under encouragement from the provincial government, the Grand River Valley Commission was established in 1934, but several municipalities refused to join[29].

Year after year, the political impasse continued to stall any progress with the project. Lengthy negotiations among the provincial government, the Grand River Valley Commission, and various municipalities occupied much of 1936. Adding to the delay was Premier Hepburn's feud with the federal government over relief and public works transfer payments[30].

In the end, the Grand River itself forced the hand of the provincial government In the summer of 1936, the Grand River dried up completely upstream from Fergus. Downstream, virtually the entire flow consisted of sewage effluent[31]. The following February, the river compensated by offering one of the worst floods in its history. The river rose about 12 feet above its normal level in Elora; more than that through the narrow confines of its course through downtown Fergus. The damage of previous floods was repeated, with the worst being felt in the downstream towns. As an encore, the river offered a second, less severe flood in the aftermath of an early June rainstorm[32].

The procrastination ended in June, 1937 when Premier Hepburn made a fresh approach to the federal government for aid in getting the Grand River project into active construction. Early in 1938 the Ontario Legislature passed the Grand River Act, creating the Grand River Conservation Commission, and providing a cost sharing formula: one quarter by the municipalities, with the remainder divided equally between the federal and provincial governments[33].

From this point, the project moved rather quickly during the summer of 1938. New surveys found a more suitable site for the major reservoir, closer to Fergus; land acquisition commenced, and the chief engineer, H.G. Acres, was hired. The building of the Shand Dam helped to solve a problem that, through inappropriate land and water use policies, had been growing for a century. Some people had recognized the problem 75 years before, and reasonable solutions had been promoted by businessmen, conservationists and even people in government for more than 25 years. It is easy to fault government for a failure to provide decisive leadership in correcting the worst effects of the exploitation of the natural environment,

but the history of the Grand River in the nineteenth century can be read more appropriately in terms of a growth in understanding by the community at large of the consequences of human activity in the river's watershed. The lesson that development must be compatible with nature is one that is not learned quickly.

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THE SHAND DAM

FIRST AND LARGEST DAM IN THE GRAND RIVER WATERSHED

by Peter Templin

With the 1930's came the realization that something had to be done in the Grand river valley to alleviate the consequences of floods and drought As Steven Thorning points out in his article, "Development and the Upper Grand River before 1938", the summer of 1936, when the Grand literally went dry above Fergus, and the spring of 1937, when serious floods occurred in both February and June, proved to be the last straw. He traces the largely futile efforts that had been made by interested parties—business men, conservationists and naturalists—to do something about the steadily deteriorating situation. In only 100 years, a pristine valley and watershed had been changed, perhaps irreversibly, as a consequence of permanent human habitation, with the resulting expansions of agriculture, forestry and industry.

It was surprising how fast things moved in the later years of the '30s. Federal, provincial and municipal governments were persuaded of the need for joint participation and for the formation of a body to collect and spend monies on the necessary remedial works.

The first Ontario legislation setting up the Grand River Conservation Commission (GRCC) passed in 1936. No municipality was to be forced to belong or to pay expenses. Six cities and towns agreed to proceed. They were the cities of Brantford and Gait, with the greatest need for action, and Fergus, Elora, Paris and Caledonia. That body proved unworkable and, in 1938, new legislation required that eight municipalities form the commission and share costs. Caledonia was dropped and Kitchener, Waterloo and Preston were added.[1]

The federal and provincial governments had agreed to share equally three-quarters of the cost of remedial works proposed by the GRCC, to a limit of $2,000,000. The member communities were to pay the remaining quarter. Each municipality's percentage was determined by James Mackintosh, an Ontario Hydro engineer, who led a 2-year survey of the

Grand valley in 1935-37. Fergus' share was something less than one-half of one per cent, an amount less than $10,000 for the entire Shand dam project[2].

Enabling legislation for the GRCC was largely based on U.S. experience in the Muskingum River watershed in Ohio where the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers had supervised the building of 14 dams to control conditions in a watershed resembling the Grand in size, and for exactly the same reasons. The noted American author, Louis Bromfield, had established his Malabar Farm in the watershed and made it a showpiece for the promotion of conservation practices such as strip cropping, contour plowing and reforestation. The GRCC and its engineers made numerous trips to Ohio.

Previous engineering reports, sanctioned by the Ontario government and prepared by Ontario Hydro engineers, had recommended the construction of storage dams below Elora, now known as the West Montrose site, and at the 12th line of East Garafraxa, Dufferin county, 5 miles above Belwood, known as the Waldemar site[3]. The latter seemed to be the logical choice for the first dam. It had been chosen by James Mackintosh and would store 10,000 acre-feet of water (enough to cover 10,000 acres to a depth of 1 foot). Other dams were planned for the future at Luther marsh and at Hollen on the Conestoga river in Peel township, known now as the Conestoga site.

The new Commission held its first meeting on May 19, 1938, in the Toronto office of Hon. Colin Campbell, Ontario's Minister of Public Works in the Liberal Government of Hon. Mitchell F. Hepburn. The second meeting was at the home of Hugh Templin, in Fergus. Those attending were Hon. Colin Campbell and his deputy minister, R.A. McAllister; mayor R.J. Waterous, E.T. Sterne and P.P. Adams, Brantford; mayor George Gordon and Marcel Pequegnat, Kitchener; mayor R.K. Serviss and William Philip, Gait; mayor Allan Scott, Paris; mayor Robert Beith, Preston; mayor W. McKersie, Waterloo; Udney Richardson, Elora and Hugh Templin, Fergus[4].

The commission's first major move, on July 26th, was to employ the firm of H.G. Acres & Co., Niagara Falls, as consulting engineers. On August 25th, the company started an extensive survey of the sites at West Montrose and Waldemar. Hugh Templin had suggested an additional site at the 3rd line of West Garafraxa township, 3 miles upstream from

Fergus and a short mile east of Shand's school. To test the foundation rock, the Acres company recommended that diamond drilling be done. Round-the-clock work began at the Shand site on Oct. 26,1938, followed by work at Waldemar. Rock formations at the Shand site proved much superior to West Montrose and storage capacity there exceeded both other locations. As a result, on Feb. 17, 1939, Mr. Acres recommended the Fergus site and a smaller dam at Luther marsh, estimating that both could be done within the $2 million dollar cap placed by the senior governments.

On June 9th, 1939, the contract was let for construction of the dam to Rayner Construction Ltd. of Leaside (Toronto). In just a few days more than one year, the Commission had been formed, engineers hired, plans prepared, tenders called and the contract let for what, at that time, was Canada's first large water conservation dam.

Rayner's wasted no time. Within 10 days, construction of a camp had begun. It eventually had about a dozen buildings. One bunkhouse burned in 1940 and most of the rest were dismantled in Feb. 1941. At peak times it accommodated nearly 200 men. Most of the unskilled labour came from the ranks of the unemployed in cities and towns of the valley. This was a requirement written into the contract and was a substantial factor in the reduction of the welfare rolls in those communities.

Work proceeded rapidly on the central structure, which was reinforced concrete anchored some 12 feet into the bedrock of the river. The two wing walls at the sides of the spillway had to be well under way before clay fill could be placed on the north and south sections of the dam. A large concrete mixing plant was erected and from it concrete was pumped through portable pipe sections to all parts of the dam. A large gravel pit a mile upstream supplied sand and crushed stone for the project. By November, when work stopped for the season, about one-third of the total concrete had been poured.

World War II had begun on Sept 3rd, 1939 and, after consultations with the governments at Toronto and Ottawa, it was decided that the project was too far advanced to be mothballed for the war's duration. On April 29th, 1940, after high water had subsided, the contractor began the big push to complete the project before year's end. In June, a stone quarry was opened downstream from the dam, on the Fred Hampton farm, to provide the limestone rip-rap which covers the up and downstream sides of the earth-fill sections. Work proceeded, in good weather, on a 24-hour

a day basis. By November 14th, the Fergus News-Record reported that all Canadian records were broken when 335,000 cubic yards of clay were put in place and compacted in just 5 weeks. There are 535,000 cubic yards of clay in the structure as well as 41,000 cubic yards of concrete.

Minor floods had caused setbacks on May 25th and June llth. On the latter date, a diversion dam broke, damaging vulnerable concrete forms. By the end of 1940, the clay and rock portions of the dam were completed. In the spillway section, constructed entirely of concrete, some two-thirds of the work was done. Work then slowed to a near standstill, due to a conflict over the CPR railway line.

The 30-mile line ran from Elora, through Fergus, Belwood, Orton, Hillsburg and Erin to Cataract, where it joined the main line from Toronto to Orangeville and Owen Sound. There was a turntable at Elora so that locomotives could be turned around. The big user of the line was Beatty Bros, in Fergus who, in some years, shipped whole trainloads of appliances at a time to their various "Beatty Washer Stores" across Canada. One factor in the choice of the Shand site was the fact that there were no bridges on the Grand from the 2nd to the 6th concessions of West Garafraxa so only two bridges would be affected, the one on the 6th to be removed, the other at Belwood to be raised. But the railway was another matter. From Spier's station, a "flag stop" at the 2nd line near the Fergus-Belwood road, the railway went down into the river valley to cross a substantial steel bridge and proceed on the south bank to Belwood.

Negotiations between the GRCC and the CPR had been going on since October 1939, when the CPR had promised municipalities along its route that the line would not be closed. The Commission learned that the line was not profitable for the CPR[5]. In September 1940, the Commission offered the CPR $50,000 to close down the line, after Mr. Acres estimated it would cost $260,000 to move it to a crossing location nearer Belwood. The railway asked that the amount be raised to $100,000 and, after bargaining, the sides agreed on $80,000[6]. Municipalities along the railway got together and hired a lawyer to fight the closing. The federal Board of Transport Commissioners held a hearing in Guelph in February 1941 and reserved its decision. Subsequently, on May 15th, it passed its decision that the railway must continue to operate.

Work had been held up on completing the concrete spillway at the dam because the superstructure would need to be strengthened if the

railway were to cross over the dam. On Sept. 6, 1941, a contract was awarded to Rayner's for $267,500 to re-route the railway over the dam, as tests had shown there was no suitable site for foundations for a railway bridge crossing the lake near Belwood. The new line was one and three-quarter miles longer than the old, and the CPR asked for $63,620 for this extra run for future trains. (It eventually got $34,750).

By Jan. 24th, 1942, work had finished at the dam with the installation of the four massive steel gates. The "last spike" on the railway diversion was driven by William Philip, commission chairman, and on Mar. 9th, 1942, the first train crossed over the dam. Eight days later, the spring run-off began and the dam was filled to 39 feet in depth, just slightly over half-way to the top. It has been filled to the top every year since.

Concurrent with dam construction, the commission had to acquire 2,000 acres of land in the future lake bottom. In 1939, as its land buyer, it hired Belwood resident John A Goodall, a retired engineer, who started immediately on the work in that village. Almost half its houses and most of its business section were affected. The commission favoured moving the buildings to higher ground but many chose the option of selling their properties and moving away. By August 1939, two houses had been moved to higher land.

Mr. Goodall died in March 1940 and was succeeded by RH. Smith, a former West Garafraxa Reeve and Wellington County Warden, who completed the job. Some people appealed the sums offered for their properties to the province's Municipal Board, but in almost all cases the commission's offer was upheld. Some commission members felt the offers were overly generous. At one meeting the mayor of Brantford claimed that "land prices around Fergus are twice as high as farm prices near Brantford"[7].

By August 1940, a contract had been let to RA Btyth Construction, of Toronto, to raise the Belwood bridge and its approaches. On Christmas day, the temperature reached 50 °F and by the 28th an unseasonable flood carried away the temporary bridge so that Belwood was cut off from the south bank for a few weeks. The bridge has since been replaced with a modern concrete structure.

The total cost of the project was $1,942,000. The senior governments had put a ceiling of $2 million on costs for which they would pay 75% so that there were no extra levies on the valley's cities and towns.

The GRCC had a contest to choose names for the dam and lake. The official name chosen was the Grand Valley Dam, which turned out to be inappropriate as tourists were turning up in the village of Grand Valley, some 11 miles upstream, looking for the dam. The name Shand, derived from a pioneer Garafraxa family and given to a school one concession to the west of the dam, has become much more common. The official choice for the lake, Lake Belwood, has become widely accepted.

The Official Opening ceremony was held at the dam on Aug. 7th, 1942. Principal speaker was Ontario's premier, Mitchell F. Hepburn. That night, Rayner Construction sponsored a street dance in Fergus and a block of St. Andrew Street was closed for the occasion. Food was prepared for 5000, and it was all consumed. It was certainly the largest "party" ever held in Fergus. The Wellington County Stamp Club pressured the post office into issuing a special cancellation that was used on mail from Elora and Fergus on that day.

Because of the spending limit of $2 million, the dam proposed for Luther marsh was delayed, but not forgotten. The GRCC went on to build a dam in Luther on Black Creek, near the village of Monticello, in 1952, at a cost of $250,000 and on the Conestoga, near Hollen, in Peel township, at a cost of $5,400,000. The government of Ontario, with new-found missionary zeal for conservation, formed conservation authorities in many of Ontario's watersheds, including the Grand Valley Conservation Authority (GRCA). The GRCA eventually absorbed the GRCC and has gone on to greatly expand the work in the building of further water reservoirs, recreation parks and reforestation.

Today, fifty years later, there is little doubt that the Shand dam has proven its worth many times over. More than 100 cottage lots were leased on the shores of Lake Belwood. A tree nursery was established at the dam site, and over a million and a half trees planted around the lake. Undoubtedly the existence of a large recreation area so close by has been of economic benefit to Fergus, especially during the summer tourist season.

Disastrous floods on the Grand are a thing of the past, especially in the Fergus-Elora area. Benefits are hard to measure but on just one occasion alone, when Hurricane Hazel struck southern Ontario on Oct. 15th, 1954, not one life was lost in the Grand watershed while loss of life and property was tremendous in the Toronto region. The Toronto *Star*

headed its lead editorial "Big Dam Saved Cities" in praise of the Shand dam's capacity to lessen the disaster for residents along the Grand[8].

Certainly it's a different river in the summertime when there's always sufficient water to make a pleasant stream. Vegetation grows to water's edge where formerly the annual ice jams would clear off trees and topsoil. The Region of Waterloo is depending on the river as a source for underground recharge of the wells from which Kitchener and Waterloo get their water.

It's interesting to speculate as to what the Shand dam project would have cost if it had been postponed 50 years. And what would have been the devastation from floods and the deprivation from drought in these intervening years!

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REMINISCENCES OF SHAND DAM CONSTRUCTION, 1939

by Peter Templin

"Is he a fairly sturdy lad?" That was the only question asked. The man asking it was Jim Brown, the superintendent for Rayner Construction of Leaside (Toronto), the company that three weeks earlier, on June 9th, 1939, had been awarded the contract for construction of the Shand dam at Fergus.

My father, Hugh Templin, told me this some years later and his positive response at the time led to instructions for me to report to Mr. Brown at the job site at 7 a.m. next morning.

The job was as "water boy", carrying a pail of drinking water to the various locations on the site. For a 15-year old, the prospect of a first full-time job held excitement and more than a little trepidation. By the end of the first 10-hour day, I remember how my bones ached and I could hardly crawl into bed. Only at the end of the first 6-day week did it once again feel comfortable to straighten up and only after another week, with the first pay day, did it begin to feel worthwhile.

Not that the pay was that great. It was $1.50 for a 10-hour day. By today's expectations it is unbelievable, but in 1939 a job was a job. Friends who were lucky enough to get summer employment at Beatty Bros., Fergus' largest employer, were receiving 17Vi cents an hour. Those of us who were employed at all were the envy of our contemporaries. My job had one fringe benefit—whenever it rained and work stopped, pay went on. There was a disadvantage, too. Since the job was over three miles from home, transportation was necessary. Thanks to an older brother, Jack, who had recently received a driver's license, and my father's old Essex car, I got a ride both ways each day for a $2 weekly fee. At 6:30 each morning there weren't many words said between passenger and driver, who still considered the job an imposed burden.

At the dam site, the Fergus-Orangeville road was perfectly straight and intersected the 3rd line of West Garafraxa at a ninety-degree angle.

At the north-east corner of this intersection there sprang up, almost overnight, the construction camp. At the corner stood the construction office and along the concession towards the river were a building to accommodate office and supervisory staff, a large commissary or dining hall, buildings for dormitory accommodation of workers, then stores buildings, carpenter shop and finally, on the high bank above the river, a storage building with water tank attached. That's where the water boy filled his pails. Along the Orangeville road, east from the main office, was storage for lumber, oil and coal supplies and a repair shop for construction machinery.

The water boy's job was to make a circuit of the site approximately once an hour or as fast as his legs would carry him. Clearing of wooded areas in the future lake bottom had just begun and the southern bank just above the dam was heavily treed with hardwoods up the slope and cedars in the valley bottom. Tom Huxtable, a roly-poly, part-time farmer from Homing's Mills had been hired as foreman for the clearing crew. His men were largely unskilled labourers from cities down the Grand River valley. That had been written into the contract with Rayner's—one of the principal reasons for proceeding with construction had been to alleviate unemployment in the contributing communities as the Great Depression seemed to linger on. Those communities were the cities of Kitchener, Gait and Brantford and the villages of Elora and Fergus, all of which had members on the Grand River Conservation Commission.

Tom's men were born too soon to benefit from the chain saw. Their implements were the crosscut saw and the axe. Some logs were sold to sawmills. The rest of the branches and brush were burned on the spot with the help of kerosene and used oil. The heavy smoke that resulted appeared of little concern to anyone in that day when the word "pollution" had no place in our thinking.

Then it was on down into the valley on the network of roads and pathways churned up by bulldozers and trucks. Dam foundations went some 12 feet into the bedrock so in late June there was still some blasting and rock excavation, followed by carpenters building forms for the pouring of concrete. A large portable mixer was at work in the river bed but concrete was soon to come by pipeline from a huge mixing plant quickly taking shape on the top of the south bank just downstream from where the dam would eventually appear. Moving concrete by 8-inch pipeline

Grand River Conservation Commission at the Shand Dam, September 19,1939. On the left, workmen disconnect and flush sections of the pipeline carrying concrete.

was a relatively new phenomenon and many bugs had to be ironed out. The chief of these was that, when stoppages occurred, the pipe sections had to be quickly disconnected and flushed clear before the concrete started to set.

Gas-powered water pumps were numerous on site as water seeped into rock excavations. Diamond drillers had worked the previous winter to extract cores showing the rock formation under the site and some cement had been pumped, under high pressure, into the underground formation, to fill cracks in the rock strata. The main stream of the river had been diverted to the north and a temporary timber bridge erected over it. The place was a hive of activity at all daylight hours. As a result, by the end of October, over a third of the concrete in the central portion of the dam had been poured, though because of the tapering of the dam as it rose, the progress was not so apparent to an observer.

Then it was back up the bank for the water boy, in the direction of the cement plant. Along the way there might be other crews of men working. Steam shovels, accurately named and belching black smoke, were terracing the steep south bank so that the earthen dam would be property anchored to the river's edge. Compared to today's compact diesel machines they were noisy, clumsy monsters, but ever-fascinating to young men and boys. The two-man crew consisted of an operator and a fireman. The operator sat in front in a tractor seat and by means of three levers, two foot pedals and an overhead rope, controlled the action of the shovel. The fireman worked in the back, shovelling soft coal into the firebox below the boiler where the steam was generated to run all the pistons on the machine. The main body of the machine rotated on a base, which had massive tracks by which the machine could move from one site to another at a snail's pace. The shovels required a constant supply of water from a tank truck, and soft coal. The shovel operator was reputed to be the highest-paid labourer on the construction site at something over $1 per hour.

Then it was on to the cement plant where men were always thirsty as there was a continual pall of cement dust and fine sand particles in the air. The large open structure of heavy timbers was about three storeys high. Sand, aggregate and cement were hoisted by a "clam shell" crane into appropriate bins at the top level. Proper mixtures, by weight, were fed down chutes into the mixer below, which turned on massive bearings.

From here, the concrete was led through a powerful pump into the portable cast iron pipe to the appropriate destination.

Gravel and sand of very high quality came from a pit which had been discovered on the soon-to-be-submerged Wilfred Hughes farm, exactly one concession upstream from the dam. A brand new road was quickly constructed from the cement plant to the pit, running in an almost straight line. At low water, even today, higher parts of this roadway are still visible, as are the open pits on the north and south banks from which clay was removed for the fill portions of the dam. The removal of materials was carefully planned to be from the future lake bottom so that the storage capacity of the lake was maximized. This strategy ensured that there would be no eyesores left around Lake Belwood as souvenirs of construction.

Huge new earth-moving machines began to appear on the site. These were U.S.-built by the R. G. LeTourneau Company and were appropriately called "LeTourneaus". The company has long since been absorbed by the Caterpillar Tractor Company of Peoria, I1L, whose machines are familiar at large-scale construction sites throughout much of the world, wherever large quantities of earth have to be moved.

One day in July 1939 there appeared at the Shand dam a brand new earth-moving monster called a Tournapull. It was a machine which made an effort to combine the tractor and earth bucket into one machine. The massive diesel engine stuck out in front on a framework and the driver was located immediately behind, over and between two massive tires. A large yoke, shaped like an inverted U, connected this front part to the bucket which had two similar large rubber tires. So it was, in fact, a four-wheeled machine. It proved to have many bugs, the most serious of which was the breakage of the yoke joining front and rear, causing the operator to be thrown from his seat, as though in a catapult, as the engine dropped to the ground. It had less traction, too, than the machines hauled by tractors with cleated tracks, so it usually had to have a "pusher" bulldozer behind when being filled. Such machines are quite common today but this early model lasted only a few weeks on the job.

Then for the water boy, it was back to the tap for a refill and off again on the rounds. The first couple of circuits in the day were usually pretty routine. The 7 a.m. trip would require a sweater and cap. Then, about 10 a.m., it was time to shed clothes and take a pail in each hand. Thank goodness things closed down at 12 noon for an hour. Men living

on site headed for the bunkhouses and commissary dining hall. Those who brought lunch pails would seek out shady spots up or downstream from the site.

The men's quarters were much like the barracks that were to soon spring up on army campsites across Canada. Double-decker bunks in too-close rows filled most available space. As this was a warm-weather camp, washing facilities were out back, exposed to the elements, except for an overhanging roof. A large galvanized metal trough held several enamel wash basins. Mirrors hung on 2x4s for those who cared what they looked like. Camp behaviour impressed mightily a 15-year old away from home for the first time. I learned that soap isn't necessary for shaving, it being quite common to see a man unwrap a Gillette Blue Blade, put it in the razor and proceed to shave with just a little cold water. Another unforgettable moment was seeing the use of a "hot bottle" to remove the contents of a boil from a man's neck. In those days, before medicare, boils and similar infections were much more common, as were self-administered treatments. The process included heating a bottle quite hot, then clapping it over the infection so that when cooling occurred, with a suction effect, the contents were drawn out into the bottle. The whole operation was said to guarantee a scar.

The running of the camp was contracted to Crawtey and McCracken, a company which had many such operations in construction, mining and lumber camps in the North. It had an up-scale division which ran high-class Murray's restaurants in some larger cities, including several in Toronto. Camp food was not exactly gourmet - but a good introduction for those who would soon see plenty more of the same while serving in Canada's armed forces. The company also ran a commissary where men could buy cigarettes, chocolate bars, toiletries, etc., even on credit, with deduction from the next pay envelope.

After lunch the water boy faced the crunch. Two pails of water were insufficient for a complete circuit, so that it was often back to the tap with only part rounds completed. This meant longer time between appearances and water that was well warmed for those obliged to drink from near the bottom of the pail There were a few complainers, but most were understanding. In those days drinking from a common dipper was normal practice; on the rare occasion when a man would rinse the dipper and discard a few teaspoonfuls before drinking, the waterboy would shed

a few inward tears. Thank goodness, sanitary inspectors had yet to be invented!

Afternoons, too, were the times when the V.I.P.'s were apt to appear on site. At least once a week, the president, George Rayner, would visit, usually accompanied by his general superintendent, George Waring. Mr. Rayner had achieved success by sheer hard work in the construction business. He would take time to talk to the men on the job, including such humble ones as the water boy, and was obviously highly respected by his managers and veteran employees. His lifetime work had given him, besides financial success, a mastery of the art of profanity, including the splitting of an occasional word to insert an expletive in the middle. Prior to the Fergus job his company had completed a large highway construction contract at Thessalon, near Sault Ste. Marie. On completion of the Shand dam in 1942 he treated the people of Fergus to a very successful street dance and party, with food for all. The catering he asked to be given to various church ladies' organizations in Fergus, but cautioned that when he had done the same thing in Thessalon and been presented with the bill, he felt he had "paid off every god-damned church debt in Thessalon!". Words that impressed a 16-year old! The Rayner company went from Fergus to be the prime contractor in the consortium of Rayner-Robertson which constructed the first section of the Toronto subway shortly after World War II.

Daily on the site would be seen K. C. "Shorty" Fellowes, the six-foot-six resident engineer for the H. G. Acres company of Niagara Falls, Ont., whose men had designed the dam and which company later went on to become one of the leading designers of power and water conservation dams throughout the world. Mr. Acres himself came often to Fergus. Politicians made appearances, of course as federal, provincial and local governments were sharing costs. These included Hon. Colin Campbell, Ontario's Minister of Public Works, at the official sod turning on July 7th, 1939, when some 1500 gathered for the on-site ceremony. Ontario's premier, Mitchell F. Hepburn, was the principal guest for the Official Opening on August 7th, 1942, when the crowd was estimated at 3500.

The first big break for the water boy occurred about mid-July when the project went on a two-shift schedule. I was asked to choose and quickly picked the 6 a.m to 2 p.m. shift and a second lad was hired for the later stint through the hottest part of the day. Earth fill started

in earnest, especially on the south half of the dam and clay pits were opened upstream on both sides of the river, so that construction activity was spreading farther and farther afield. There was a certain feeling of sadness when time came to lay down the pails and return to a final year of high school.

Shock came with the declaration of war against Germany on September 3rd. After consultation among governments, it was decided that the Shand dam should be rushed to completion, so that after a six-month winter break work resumed in April 1940. That summer, on enquiring about a the possibility of work with Rayner's, I was given the job of weigh master at the big gravel pit operation at exactly double the pay of the first year. Following the pit closing in October, when enough material was stockpiled at the damsite, I was lucky enough to get a winter job with the engineer's survey party. However, the one that sticks most vividly in my memory is the first, and toughest—the job that taught me about water consumption and conservation!

VICTIMS OF FICTION:
RESEARCH NOTES ON "THE LOVE STORY OF FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE AND JOHN SMITHURST"

by Rev. Eric R. Griffin

Some months ago two chalices were stolen from St. John's church, Elora. They were eventually recovered, but there was quite a lot of publicity and concern about the theft, partly because any theft of church furnishings is a serious affair, but primarily because these particular chalices were supposedly the personal gift of Florence Nightingale to a former rector of the parish, John Smithurst, as a token of unrequited love. Coincidentally, this year the Elora Festival will be launching a recently commissioned opera about Florence, which draws heavily on the love story between her and John. In my earlier biographical essay of the Rev. Mr. John Smithurst published in this journal (Vol. 1,1987) I expressed my doubts concerning the authenticity of this story, and in a postscript appended to that article, discussed the issue more thoroughly. There were left some points for further research, for which I wrote at the time I had not the "time, resources, nor opportunity". Since then I have found some opportunity to follow up some clues, and this short paper will summarize my present findings and working hypothesis with respect to any connection between Florence and John.[1]! intend to go no further with this project, and anyone who wishes to use this material and to research the subject more thoroughly may do so with my encouragement and blessing. From the beginning, my chief interest has been with Smithurst himself, and for him to be honoured simply because of a supposed love affair with a famous woman does his memory a great disservice, and trivializes his substantial contributions to Canadian history.

My current hypothesis that the story entitled "The Love Story of Florence Nightingale and John Smithurst", written by Mr. John Connon[2] is a work of historical fiction. In my earlier essay, I pointed out many discrepancies in this narrative when compared with the facts it purports to relate, not least of which is the false translation of the Latin inscription on the Communion silver bequeathed by Smithurst to St. John's. This

story was originally published in the Toronto *Sunday World* 16 October 1921 on pages 1 and 2 of the Magazine section, under the title "The Love Story of Florence Nightingale". Several searches of libraries and archives to find the original article at first proved fruitless, because only one edition of the *Sunday World* from 1921 exists, although all of the weekday issues are available. Happily, however, Mr. Connon saved two copies of the original story, which are now deposited along with the rest of his papers in the archives at the University of Guelph. I was also able to locate the item which Connon claims in the "Love Story" appeared in a "daily paper" (unnamed, but in fact the London *Evening Free Press,* 19 August, 1910, p. 12) regarding the connection between Florence and one William Shore, who died in Fox Lake, Wisconsin in 1868. Mr. Shore, the item claims, was a cousin to Miss Nightingale and in love with her, but since they were forbidden to marry due to consanguinity, he came broken-hearted to the New World, both having vowed never to marry. There was also an oral tradition in Elora that Florence sent a second set of communion silver to him, matching the one she gave Smithurst Miss Nightingale's obituaries, on Monday August 15 1910 were found in both the *World* and the *Free Press,* and no mention of any connection with Mr. Smithurst was made in either of them.

A letter to the archivist in Fox Lake Wisconsin produced some encouraging results. Mr. Shore is indeed buried there; he was in fact a cousin of Florence Nightingale; and until his death, he lived the leisured sporting life of a wealthy "remittance man."[3] Mr. Shore was not a clergyman, nor is there any local story of a second set of communion silver.

The discovery of a second set of communion silver was sheer serendipity. While at a clergy conference last year, I happened to be speaking to a priest who had been Rector in Manitoba of one of the former Red River Settlement parishes. He told me that St. Andrew's parish, St. Andrew's, Manitoba, has a set of communion silver which has always been reputed to be a gift to the parish from the family of Florence Nightingale, while it was a Church Missionary Society mission, and was received while John Smithurst was Missionary-in-charge of the settlement. This is very probable, as the Nightingales were well known to be supporters of the CMS, and countless similar gifts were sent to missions all over the world by different groups and families. Unfortunately, the silver is not engraved or hallmarked, so the source of the gift cannot at present be absolutely

proven. Thus it seems very probable that Smithurst did indeed receive a set of communion silver, but from the Nightingale family rather than from Florence herself; this was no doubt intended for the Red River Settlement and not for himself personally. It is not the one at present residing in the parish of St. John's Elora.

This leads us to the final point of my present research, namely a supposed letter from Florence Nightingale to Colonel Clarke, Speaker of the Provincial Legislature and MPP for Elora, in which she mentions the communion silver she gave as a gift to Smithurst. The letter apparently establishes that the Smithurst silver in Elora is in fact from Florence, and its existence would add great credence to the love story. The letter is said to be a response to Col. Clarke regarding some questions of public sanitation, but in the postscript, Florence states that she noticed Clarke's Elora letterhead, and wondered if Mr. Smithurst still possessed the communion set she gave to him[4]. Extensive searching of the Clarke papers in the National and Provincial Archives has failed to produce the letter. This in itself is not particularly significant, for if the letter does exist, and it well may, it is probably filed in one of the thousands of uncatalogued archival boxes stored at Queen's Park. Then again, without the letter, nothing can be proven. If this letter exists, however, I strongly suspect that the silver Florence referred to would be the Red River silver given by her family while Smithurst was stationed there, not the silver bequeathed to St. John's Elora by Smithurst. The silver in Elora, according to its inscription (and there is no reason not to take it at its face value) is from Ebenezer Hall, former pupil and lifelong friend of John Smithurst, who became the owner of a silverplating firm in Sheffield. Mr. Connon needed to impose a translation onto the Latin text which would accommodate his conclusions, claiming that Mr. Hall is named simply as the agent for the true giver of the gift; but *alumnus ejus* means "his pupil", not "acting as agent for someone". The only conclusion to be drawn is that the Elora silver in no way connects Florence Nightingale with John Smithurst.

Perhaps one might speculate on the circumstances of the composition of the "Love Story" thusly: because he was interested in the history of Elora, and considered himself to be an authority on it, Connon knew about Smithurst and his years spent at the Red River mission. A few days after the death of Florence Nightingale, which was big news everywhere, he happened across the Fox Lake item on William Shore as

the unrequited lover/cousin of Florence. By conflating the circumstances of the lover/cousin in Fox Lake with Smithurst, and by conflating the Nightingale family gift of silver received by John while he was in the Red River Settlement with the personal gift of silver from Ebenezer Hall, Mr. Connon was able to produce, eleven years after Florence's death, a romantic story set in a realistic, historical, Canadian, and (because he is an Elora enthusiast) a specifically local context The story was well-received, reprinted in several papers[5], (reprints have been on sale at St. John's Church since 1953) and the story was quickly received into local oral history first as legend and then as truth. Connon's conflation of real events with fiction was not an uncommon literary device, although in his case it is more likely the result of bad historical method, and he apparently felt no compulsion to restrict himself to mere documented facts[6]. I can see no other conclusion than to consider the "Love Story" a work of sentimental fiction, set in an authentic, albeit elaborately embroidered, historical context.

This does not mean, however, that Connon composed the story as fiction: he may well have believed (or at least hoped) that it was true, and marshalled his evidence in support of it accordingly, based on stories he may have heard in his youth. Connon had collected clippings on Florence for some years before she died; it seems that he might have been thinking about the love story long before he actually wrote it[7].

Nonetheless, Connon in this case is a most dubious historian, and must be read with caution. He may not have cared to, or have been able to, distinguish between fact and hearsay.
Connon's difficulty was in evaluating his sources. He had no training in history, and probably overvalued the accuracy of his oral sources, using whatever he could find to verify his preconceived version of the story. This accounts for the preface "the story was once well known in Elora but is now forgotten..." that begins many published versions of the story[8]-
Yet the question remains, apart from its veracity, of how the story began, if it did not originate with Connon. I do not think that the answer can ever be fully known. It is possible, however, that John Smithurst may have started the story himself, or at least told people, after her rise to fame, that he knew Florence, thereby beginning an oral tradition in Elora which would grow in the telling, and upon which Connon would later build; for Smithurst was rather well-known as a talker and story-teller. But as

I also said in my first essay, if he did tell people that he and Florence were in love, "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 his life". In short, it is not impossible to believe that he may have told a few "stretchers" to people who had no way of confirming his claims. It is ironic that Connonshould himself provide for this possibility, albeit sarcastically, when he tried to disprove the Fox Lake item, by saying that the William Shore connection might be true, but only if Smithurst were a liar. Hoist by his own petard, as it were.

Although it is not impossible that they had at one time been acquainted, there is no evidence that Florence and John were even aware of one another's existence, at least not prior to about 1840. Likewise, there is no evidence whatsoever that Florence and John were related. However, if they were, and had they wanted to marry, being cousins would not have been an impediment. In the 19th century, first cousins often married: indeed Queen Victoria herself was married to her first cousin, Albert. But Florence does not appear to have been the marrying sort: she was openly disdainful of the institution of marriage, regarding it as man's chief weapon for the subjugation of women'. As well, she kept some unorthodox religious opinions, even for a 19th century Unitarian. If she were to fall in love, it seems highly unlikely that it would have been with an evangelical, mission-minded, C of E warehouseman with high-church tendencies. There was, as well, a serious age difference between them, for when John enrolled at the seminary in Islington he was 29 and she only 16[10]. One thing John and Florence did share, however, was a notorious propensity towards bad-temperedness, and this would have had done little to endear them one to another. Moreover, class differences would have been difficult to overcome. The Nightingale family was extremely well-to-do, and moved in high society, the Smithursts, if not actually poor, were nowhere near the same social rank. The Nightingales owned two estates, one in Leahurst, where Smithurst lived, and the other in the New Forest; they had Mayfair rooms in London, and they often toured the Continent: it is unlikely that there would have been much opportunity for John and Florence to meet and to fall in love, as the Nightingales made the seasonal rounds of the fashionable "social circuit". All of the above is circumstantial, to be sure, but amounts to a point of view very different from that given to us by Connon, and from which the love story seems even more

improbable. None of Nightingale's biographers make any mention of a love story whatsoever[11].

While engaged in a parish-exchange with an English priest four years ago, I became acquainted with a woman whose family was from Derbyshire, near the Nightingale home. Her family's legend is that there was a local man, a cousin, who fell in love with Florence, was forbidden to marry her, and departed in grief to the New World. At first glance, one might think that this would confirm the love story between Nightingale and Smithurst, but, if this story is true, I suspect that the man in question is William Shore. He at least seems to have been a legitimate cousin and from a family of some substance, making him a much more likely suitor. This sort of oral tradition can be quite valuable, if not for fact then at least for a few leads for research. The oral tradition in Elora did lead me to look for a second set of silver. On the other hand, the existence of the oral tradition in Elora is often used as evidence or "proof of the Smithurst love story, but there is little to show that this tradition existed prior to 1921. I believe that the oral tradition in Elora began with the publication of Mr. Connon's romance, which in fact concludes with the statement that the story was being "made public for the first time" (although the possibility exists that the germ of the legend began earlier). Since the publication was 71 years ago, there would be few people alive today who didn't grow up knowing the story.

To reiterate: there is not a scrap of evidence to support any connection whatever between John Smithurst and Florence Nightingale; the silver in Elora is indisputably a personal gift to Smithurst from Ebenezer Hall alone; and the hypothesis which seems best to fit the circumstances as we have them at present is: that the Nightingale silver is the communion service now residing in St. Andrew's, Manitoba, which was not a personal gift to John, but rather was received by him as a gift from Florence's parents to the church mission; that by conflating the circumstances of Smithurst and Shore, and by conflating (or perhaps confusing) the two sets of silver, John Connon was able to produce a fictional historical romance for the entertainment of his Sunday readers, which has unfortunately become accepted as fact, and which I have shown here and in other places to contain both factual errors and outright fabrication. Its fictional nature could very well be due to Connon's naive historical method, rather than a from a desire on his part to fabricate a whole story. Nonetheless, the story has

been accepted as true for many years. It has gained credibility through habit and custom of repetition; through events such as the annual Nursing Services (begun in 1946 and held for some years in the Church in Elora); through occasional publicity over the years and the mild tourist trade that has been generated; and through the sheer appeal of the romance. People want it to be true, and are unwilling to be skeptical. For example, in the Toronto Star's report of the theft of the chalices last summer, it was the love story in all its cloying Connonian splendour that was reported as fact, even to the inclusion of the false translation of the inscription[12].

It cannot be absolutely proven that my present theory is entirely correct in every detail; nonetheless, I feel that it is sufficiently plausible, and is the simplest explanation which fits all of the details as we now have them. I believe that if anyone wishes to assert that some connection existed between Nightingale and Smithurst, the onus is on that person to provide some supporting evidence, and to do so without reference to the document entitled "The Love Story of Florence Nightingale and John Smithurst" or its derivatives.

It must be confessed that from time to time I feel rather badly, for I know that it appears to some people that I am on some sort of malicious crusade of iconoclasm, gleefully out to destroy Elora's fine old myth. But this is not true. I feel strongly that by restoring the true history, we will be better able to find an authentic Canadian mythology, not based on third-rate sentimentality, but rather based on the accomplishments of real people. "Myth" has come to mean, in common usage, "old wives' tale"; but in fact it means "symbolic story which reveals to us who we truly are". Elora has in John Smithurst a genuine, not a second-hand, hero. If the myth we choose to cling to is the Nightingale love story, we reveal what is unfortunately our Canadian sense of inadequacy and insecurity, rooted in the assumption that anything Canadian can have significance only if it is associated with another country's heroes By assuming that our own experience can only be validated by what amounts to our adoption of another country's mythology—because our own doesn't seem to us to be quite good enough—we are diminished. In our search for a truly Canadian identity, we need to let go of our insecurities, stop apologizing for being who we are, and claim for ourselves that which is truly our own.

REFERENCES

[1] I am grateful to Steve Thorning for his advice and for his contributions towards this present paper.

[2] Historian of Elora, though unreliable, and correspondent for the Toronto *Sunday World* and London *Free Press.*

[3] This article appeared in the Beaver Dam *Citizen,* under the title "Fox Lake: Resting Place of Florence Nightingale Suitor?", written by Ruth Mielke, probably during the 1950s or 60s, but no exact date was given. I was not able to discover the source of the original 1910 wire-copy item printed in the London *Free Press.*

[4] Guelph *Mercury,* 18 March, 1988, p. 3.

[5] Connon received more recognition from this story than from anything else he did, and therefore had a strong interest in keeping it alive. He rewrote it several times, and it was published in many papers, including the Hudson's Bay Co. *The Beaver,* September 1939, under the title "The Lamp Shines in Red River."

[6] For a discussion of some of the more glaring errors in his narrative, see my first essay on John Smithurst in *Wellington County History,* Vol. 1, 1987, pp. 6, 12(n), 31.

[7] On one of these clippings, there is a marginal note "1820 + 30 = 1851: Smithurst in England", correctly deducing that both Smithurst and Nightingale were in England that year.

[8] Steve Thorning, private letter, January 1992.

[9] See L. Strachey's *Eminent Victorians* for an early biographical essay on Florence.

[10] An article on Smithurst in the London *Free Press, 1* October, 1933, by Dr. A.E. Byerly, states that the engagement between John and Florence was broken because of this age difference.

[11] A.N. Thompson relates that one of her biographers, Mrs. Woodham-Smith, has said specifically that the facts do not substantiate the story.

[12] Toronto *Star,* 20 July, 1991, p. 2. Sentimentality still makes good copy, I guess.

PAT JOHNSON: SEEKER OF TRUTH

by Donna Goodwin Mann

A new neighbour to a rural community always provoked interest, but when the newcomer was a black immigrant who predicted the future, the interest never ended. It is unlikely that Pat Johnson, who died in 1952, was an American slave or had escaped to Canada by way of the Underground Railway, but such speculation undoubtedly added to the sense of wonder and mystery felt by his young neighbour, Donna Goodwin. The author has offered us an intriguing glimpse into the unusual life of this Pilkington Township man and of the rural community in which he lived. We are left with as many questions as answers. Who was Pat Johnson?

His real name was Pat Johnson, but he was known for miles as Pat the Nigger, the fortune teller. If he were living today, we would not call him either name - they would be recognized as racist and superstitious. Yet, as a ten year old girl, that is the only name by which I knew him. I can see him plainly in my mind's eye. He was a tall stalky man who never wore stockings, winter or summer. His shoulder bones stuck out sharply beneath his thin cotton shirt. His skin was black and very dry. His eyes were dark and hollow. He often had a show of white stubble on his jaw. He didn't talk a lot, but I remember his smile and his handshake. On his shoulder he carried a knapsack in which he collected anything neighbours might give him, or animals that had been killed on the road. No one was sure how old he was, although my grandfather, who was born in 1869, thought they were about the same age.

No one knew exactly where Pat came from, although rumour had it that he had come to Ontario on the Underground Railway from Detroit. It was said that he had worked in the next county before he came to Wellington County. He walked up the sideroad in the Bethany farmland one morning and asked a local farmer if he knew of a place to stay. The

farmer directed him to someone who had an empty house. "Not much to look at," he said. Pat asked him, "Does the roof leak?" The man said, "Go and ask." Pat looked across the fields and slowly said, "Someday, it'll be ploughed from road to road." That was Pat's entrance into a community that, through time, grew to watch, sympathize with and befriend him.

As a child, I often went to Pat's house with my father, who was the reeve of Pilkington township. We took food and a word of encouragement I was never afraid of him, and often wondered why not, because he was different from anyone I had ever known.

He lived on a sideroad near our farm in a house at the end of a long lane. It was an unpainted board house, black from the weather, plain and humble and it spoke of severe poverty. Weeds grew in the yard and in the lane. Lilacs bloomed in the spring showing signs of new life. A small garden of potatoes and cucumbers grew among the weeds. An old, once-painted white kitchen chair (minus a few rungs) sat in the midst of the weeds, suggesting that Pat might have sat there at times. A windmill creaked as it cast its shadow across the yard.

Inside the house, the furnishings were simple. The odour told you that food was kept longer than it should have been and that clothing was not washed when dirty. An oil lamp sat on the table, surrounded by little piles of newspapers and clippings. The windows were dirty with smoke and grease. A couch usually covered with wrinkled sheets lined the wall. It probably served as a bed as well. The only form of heat was a wood stove which Pat used for cooking even on the hottest days. He never had a telephone or electricity.

Other people visited Pat too, but for different reasons. They found out by word of mouth that Pat had a special gift for telling them when something bad or good was going to happen to them. He took great pride in helping people find lost articles. He liked talking to people and was always home on weekends when people came to listen to him. In his humble way, he never predicted or prophesied. He never advertised this special understanding, nor did he have a business card. He didn't even ask people to come, but they came from far and near just to sit in his little kitchen and listen to him. They gave him money for his common sense and sometimes not-too-common sense, which he applied to his meagre living costs. For the most part it was his only income. Local neighbours never

remembered him being hired for a day's work, although some farmers to the south got him to help in haying and harvest They paid him in canned goods. When times were extremely difficult for Pat, he was known to walk over to the neighbours and ask for a meal, but mainly he stayed to himself. Somehow, he managed to scrape an existence out of the odd jobs with the farmers and from his weekend conversations with people. I remember one day when my dad and I were taking in a box of groceries, a young couple was sitting at his table. He was talking to them in a quiet voice. Then he said, "And you know, of course, that God is your real guide. You don't want to put your faith in me. I can be wrong— God's never wrong."

No one knew for sure whether Pat could see into the future. No one knew if it was his way, perhaps the only way he had, of relating to people, so he used it to his best advantage. Being black in the 'forties in a small rural community in Southern Ontario did not offer a very satisfactory social life. Perhaps it was the one way he had of coping with the loneliness. The days and nights must have been long for him. Many felt Pat lived the way he wanted to, with his faithful German Shepherd. If he had any close family, we never saw them, although some family did inquire at the cemetery about his burial arrangements some time later.

I remember his death with a sense of awe. Because the oil light had not been seen aglow in the window, and Pat hadn't been seen for a few days, my dad and the clerk of the township went into the house to see if he was all right. They found him lying dead on the couch in his kitchen with a crucifix in his hand. At the time, there was some controversy over who would bury him, a Roman Catholic priest or a United Church minister. He was not in good standing with either church; however, some of the neighbours thought he was Roman Catholic. Later, a verse of scripture was found neatly folded and very worn in his threadbare leather purse. Although he had not made himself present in any sanctuary, he died with his God.

I went with my father to make the arrangements for his burial, which would be paid for by the township. He was wrapped in a white sheet and laid in a wooden box.

When he was prepared for burial, the scars across his back could be plainly seen. He had been a slave earlier in his life. In many ways he had remained a slave even in his later life, relating only to a few neighbours and his weekend friends who came to him.

A very simple service was held by a priest, Father Joseph Diemert from St. Mary's parish in Maryhill, who said some kind and thoughtful words. Thanks was given for his life and he was committed back to God. The Pilkington township councillors and reeve were the pall bearers. Pat was laid to rest in Maryhill cemetery on February 14,1952, in an unmarked grave in the unblessed part. Pilkington township paid a modest funeral expense of approximately $125.00.

No one knew for sure of his religious affiliation, but the folded scripture in his small clutch spoke of a relationship with God. He is the only black person buried in the cemetery, even to this day.

Because so many people saw him make change from an old tobacco can, it was thought that he kept his money on his property. The yard was dug up and the house ransacked in search of containers. No one is telling if anything was found.

Anyone passing the property now will see only the windmill, standing tall over what once was a place of solitude for a retiring soul. It whispers stories of bygone days as the wind pushes against its broken wooden slats. The fields are barren of buildings, trees or fence bottoms. Local farmers who have heard the story look over the vast fields and smile when they remember Pat Johnson's words, "Someday, this land will be ploughed from road to road."

THE ORIGINS AND LEGACY OF SCOTTISH IMMIGRATION TO CRIEFF

by Mark Spencer

Scottish immigration to Crieff appears to have taken place mostly between the years 1828 and 1845, but extending less markedly to the 1850s, a period beginning in the post-Napoleonic era and lasting into the time of the Disruption of the Scottish Church.

Primarily, economic factors in Scotland induced the Scots to leave their homeland.[1] After the Napoleonic wars, there was economic depressioa The possibility of financial improvement, in many cases, hinged on the ability to own land, but such opportunities sharply declined in Scotland at this time due to a shrinking Scottish economy. Despite stories of hardship and isolation, the colonies offered an opportunity to own land and in turn to prosper, and the untapped potential of the colonies became irresistible.

Although most of the Scottish settlers of the Crieff area came from the Highland Shires of Argyll, Inverness, Perth and Ross where much landlord-assisted emigration took place, the early immigrants to Puslinch reached their destination thro ugh their own efforts. The new settlers were then followed by some of their relatives and perhaps by neighbours too.

The Scots' choice of Puslinch was related to the availability of newly surveyed lands here, David Gibson, the original surveyor of the township, being the key agent in encouraging Scottish settlement in Crieff.

Invaluable for learning of conditions in the home parishes of the Crieff immigrants was *The New Statistical Account of Scotland,* a fifteen volume, painstakingly-thorough account published in 1845. It clearly shows the decline in the population of many parishes due to emigration.

Many of Crieff s economic refugees originated in Argyllshire. In Killean a population decline from a high of 3306 inhabitants in 1821, to 2401 in 1841 prompted the local minister to write, "the causes of the decrease of population can only be attributed to emigration [which] has been partially carrying on since 1821."[2] He goes on to say that "the farmers...complain of high rents, and apparently with some reason."[3]

In Saddell and Skipness the population had been decreasing since 1821. But with a decrease of 354 souls between 1831 and 1841, the minister was compelled to write that

> the decrease in the amount of population of late may be accounted for in various ways, such as emigration to America and other places; the erection of subdivided farms into one; and in some instances it is owing to a system adopted by a few of the landowners, of farming or grazing portions of their own estate.[4]

Even the sizeable town of Campbelton, to which many ousted crofters undoubtedly had made their way, experienced a net decrease of population. This sort of evidence is found in other shires from which Crieff immigrants originated. In Perthshire, the population of the parish of Crieff decreased by slightly over ten per cent between 1831 and 1835.[5] In the parish of Aberfoyle, a steady decrease had occurred from 1792 to 1841. Only 549 people remained from the 790 in 1792.[6] According to the parish minister Robert Graham,

> This decrease may be attributed in a great measure to the system, now so general over the Highlands, of throwing several farms into one. The families thus dispossessed of the land on which they had found employment, emigrate to the manufacturing towns and villages in order to procure a livelihood.[7]

Similar reports are found from the parish of Kingussie in the shire of Inverness and at Dingwall parish in Rosshire. Those who could not find work in the towns and cities made their way to the shipping ports, the last stop before emigration. Echoes of these observations can be found in the "Emigration" volumes of the *British Parliamentary Papers.*

In the reports of government emigration agents based throughout Canada, some information is given about the emigrants' likely destinations in Canada. These reports also show which of the new arrivals were assisted and who paid their own way.

The reports of the Emigration Agents prior to 1853 have weekly summaries of emigration in varying degrees of completeness. Of immigrants arriving in good circumstances, there are only very general descriptions of where they intended to settle, whereas those receiving parochial aid or landlord assistance are better documented. Emigration agents had either

to pay for aided settlers' passage and provisions to go farther inland, to find them employment or distribute to them money specifically advanced from Britain for those purposes.

Very few emigrants receiving aid reached Puslinch. The reports in the *British Parliamentary Papers* make it clear that those who did were all in good circumstances. The following entry is from 1841.

> WEEK ENDING 4TH SEPTEMBER.
> The passengers in the Brig *Hants* and *Jesse Logan,* from [Greenock] are also respectable settlers in good circumstances, and all are proceeding to the western section of the province, some to Lancaster, Paslnich and Dundas, etc.[8]

("Paslnich" is undoubtedly Puslinch. Although Puslinch received its name between 1828 and 1836, in 1841 it was still not in wide use. Misspellings such Puselynch, Posselinch and Puzzlewitch have also been found.')

Much is to be learned about the first settlers from a collection of letters and papers gathered by Matthew McPhatter in 1897. These letters, in the possession of local historian Anna Jackson, a direct descendant of the original settlers, shed a personal light on the origins of the Scots who settled at Crieff. Matthew McPhatter was the grandson of Neil McPhatter, an early settler of Puslinch. Having made up his mind to write a history of Puslinch in the decade following the publication of several county historical atlases (1881-1887), the younger McPhatter asked surviving pioneers to write down their experiences.[10] Although McPhatter never wrote his history book, the letters were passed down within the community and survive today.

The McPhatters were natives of Killean, Argyllshire. They left Scotland via Greenock and Liverpool, making their way to York, where they remained for some time. In October of 1842, along with others from the parish of Killean in Kin tyre, they purchased twelve neighbouring lots on the First Concession of Puslinch Township at a land sale.[11] It seems they planned to build their own community of Killean in Canada. In Matthew McPhatter's collection of letters it is unclear whether the entire group left Argyllshire at the same time. However, it is known that they stayed a while in York, for here the connection was made with the government surveyor, David Gibsoa On his advice the Killean group bought their land, becoming among the first to settle on the First Concession of

Puslinch. Hence they established the Scottish foothold at Killean in Puslinch, a few miles from Crieff. The Scots who were to follow them would fill the First Concession, including Crieff, during the next decade.

David Gibson influenced the location in which this initial group would settle. He then spread the word that land was available in an area being settled by Scots. A "Census and Assessment" of Puslinch Township for 1835 lists Gibson as owner of no less than five lots totalling 481 acres surrounding Killeaa[12] Twenty-six years later, he is still listed as a property owner in the Township with two 100 acre lots.[13] It appears that Gibson is not only the surveyor but also the "agent" who started the settlement as well as a neighbour and friend of the settlers.

After the first Argyllshire Scots arrived in Killean, many more Highlanders would follow. Two natives of Perthshire and their families were among these immigrants. In 1833, John McDiarmid arrived with Allan Stewart Both their families originated near Loch Rannoch, Perthshire. McDiarmid had married Allan's sister Margaret in Scotland. Several sources confirm the McDiarmids and Stewarts as neighbours from 1833 onward.[14] Peter Stewart came with his family from Perthshire in 1834.[15] Alex Fraser, a native of the parish of Lochbroom in Rosshire who emigrated in 1838, gave his name to Fraserville (later re-named Crieff). Fraser donated the lot on which Knox Presbyterian Church in Crieff now stands. The Rev. William Meldrum, a native of Abernathy in Morayshire and a graduate of Aberdeen College, "answered the Call", making the journey in 1839 to minister to the Gaelic-speaking of Badenoch. His duties were to the Presbyterians of both East and West Puslinch.[16] John McPherson, a native of Badenoch in Invernesshire, and his parents arrived in Canada "with considerable moneys" to take up land in 1840.[17] William McCormick from Campbelton came with this family in 1841 and in 1843[18], John Gilchrist and his family arrived in Puslinch from the parish of Skipness.[1']

Documentation from 1841, originating in Britain, shows there had been Scottish immigrants of "good circumstances" settling in Puslinch for well over a decade. Lots in Puslinch and specifically around Crieff were sold in sections averaging 100 acres at eight shillings (then about two dollars) per acre. (Poor people desiring land were directed to specific areas of the province where free grants of 50 acre sections of land were awarded. One of these areas was along the Garafraxa and Owen's Sound Road in the north of what became Wellington County, north of Fergus.[20]) Despite

having the means to acquire property, most of the Scots who settled at Crieff were not independently wealthy. After an initial down-payment, they often took many years to pay off their farms.

News of the original settlers from Kintyre in the early 1830s drew other Highland natives from Perthshire and from the shires of Inverness and Ross over the next decade. Those who made their way to Puslinch did their share to help those less fortunate family members come here from Scotland. There is evidence of money being "deposited with the Commissioners of the Canada Company (by Settlers for Remittance to their friends)."[21] At least two entries between the years 1843 and 1852 in the *Remittance Advice Book* can be identified with Scots from Puslinch sending substantial amounts back to Scotland. Unfortunately these records reveal little specifically about the Scots at Crieff.

William McCormick who came in 1841 received, from the old country, several letters which have survived. One, dated March 3,1843, although slightly damaged, contains valuable information about the state of Scotland according to McCormick's brother-in-law Archibald McCallum who earned a comfortable living as a sheriff officer in Campbelton (£60 per annum) and as a precentor in the Gaelic Kirk (£10 per annum). In the letter, McCallum cautiously probes for information from his relative. He writes of the hope of the rest of McCormick's family to join those who have already gone to Canada:

> Your father is in great hopes of being with you this summer, but your mother has been very unwell....am advising them to wait with me, and perhaps we may go all together yet, if good encouragement is sent home....Your sister Margret is in the notionstill of going to America if she could manage it.[22]

In a letter received by William from his father Archibald McCormick, the elder McCormick requests money to bring him to Canada. "If you wish me to be with you let this letter be shown to Donald McTaggert [William's brother-in-law, husband of his sister Barbra] and to Malcolm your brother and Barbra [William's sister] and they will send me £1 lOsh. each to my home."[23] In another letter, the senior McCormick proves himself knowledgeable about shipping freight and immigrants. In both letters, Archibald McCormick complains about his feeling of uselessness in Scotland and that "money is scarce."[24]

Sensing the chance for a good future in Canada, McCallum inquires about emigration, asking McCormick to

> give us an account of all your neighbours and your acquaintances...therewas a great many letters come this winter, but there is little information given in them...Let us know what kind of weather you have, what sort of horse and cattle you have, ploughs, etc.[25]

Despite the stability of his livelihood in Scotland, McCallum seems very interested in life in the colonies. This is a divergence from popular belief. Although the Clearances and related landlord-assisted mass transportations were types of immigration that, if not peculiar to Scotland, were certainly common to that country, yet most of the Scots who immigrated to Puslinch were financially solvent. They chose to escape a depressed Scottish economy in which their net worth was annually shrinking, opting instead for the expanding frontiers of the colonies.

Not surprisingly, sections of McCallum's letter show concerns for the economic state of Scotland in 1843:

> The farmers here is very much harassed this year, the bear [barley] is very low in price, only 21/ to 28/ to the bushl. Potatoes only from 15/ to 20/ per tun. I am sure when Crophill lease is out, they will be looking out for America as the farm is so near the town, it will be put so high, that it will be useless for them to attempt taking it.[26]

McCallum's concerns extend also to the ecclesiastical sphere. Fully two months before the Disruption of the Church of Scotland in May 1843, he speaks about the state of the Scottish Kirk.

> There is great changes here. We have just now a great confusion about the church...the Ministers will leave the churches [if they do] not get their wishes, and to all appearances [this will not] be the case, and we will have to build new [churches for] ourselves, and the Government will very likely [worship] in empty walls...Let us know how you are situated in regard to Ministers in your place - if schools and churches is far distant.[27]

McCallum's concerns are not unfounded. Along with communicating about the Scottish Church, he is also inquiring about the Church in Canada.

Archie McCormick's desire to be united with his family was strong and his wish to be with his children was granted. He emigrated in 1845 but died in 1847 and was buried at Killean.[28]

William McCormick's sister Margret immigrated to Puslinch in 1852.[29] Archie McCallum and his wife eventually immigrated to Canada too.

By the 1850s, most of the land was settled. According to the *Annals of Puslinch,*

> about 1849 the Uisters from the island of Uist, about forty in number, came. Nearly double that number emigrated from the island, but cholera took its toll on the voyage over. They were too late to take up land, but lived in the area and did their share of the pioneer work.[30]

The existence of the Uisters is confirmed by Donald Stewart in *Older Voices Among Us* and by interview. According to Stewart, "they arrived in Hamilton and walked here led by a piper. None of them spoke any English...it was all Gaelic...there were shanties all along the road here in the fronts of the farms...they never held a deed."[31] Being newly arrived, without relations and the land all taken up, the natives of Uist lived by the side of the road. That this was happening by 1849, confirms that property in the Crieff area was bought out quickly.[32] The immigrants after that time appear to be relatives and friends of the initial settlers. Those like the Uisters, arriving too late to purchase land, stayed on for some time in their roadside shanties as the hired help of the district Their help was much needed, the difficult task of clearing a hundred acre farm taking many years to complete.

The immigrants brought with them their language and customs. They transplanted place names as well. In Puslinch Township, Crieff, Killean, Badenoch and Aberfoyle were all named after settlers' homes in Scotland. Even after immigration petered out in the 1850s, Crieff and other areas such as Killean and Badenoch remained heavily Scottish in character, largely due to the influence of the Presbyterian Church.

The first settlers in Crieff were "with few exceptions, natives of Kintyre, Argylshire, Perthshire and Invernesshire. Gaelic was the language they spoke, but many received instructions in the Parish schools in Scotland and could read and write English."[33] A reluctance to sever their Gaelic up-bringing is confirmed by several sources. Dating from 1835, Knox

Presbyterian Church in Crieff is one of the two original Presbyterian congregations of Puslinch. The church records report that in 1854, when there were 140 families, (70 of which were from Argyllshire), only 20 people could not speak Gaelic. Services were conducted in Gaelic, followed by a service in English. As Gaelic declined, the order of the services was reversed. "The English language only was used after 1890, except at communion services. The last communion service in Gaelic was in 1908."[3]" The use of Gaelic at Crieff is confirmed in the *Gazetteer and Directory of Wellington County, 1883-1884:* Rev. William Meldrum "ministered to the congregations of both East and West Puslinch, preaching Gaelic and English in both places."[35]

Though immigration to Crieff had virtually ceased by the 1860s, a strong Highland tie, both for the settlers and their descendants, was reinforced by the church.

The widespread use of Gaelic outside the church is also well documented. According to William McCormick, Jr. who arrived with his family in 1841, near the end of the great influx of Scots,

> in those days in Kintyre, Argyllshire, it was the Gaelic language we were taught and I knew all the shorter [catechism] in the English language and did not understand one word of iL..the teachers would teach both the English and the Gaelic at the same time in the schools so that really the Gaelic language was my first language.[36]

Donald A Stewart, a direct descendent of the pioneers and life-long resident on the home farm near Crieff, speaks today of the use of Gaelic *after* the turn of the century. Unless by his Aunt, Gaelic was rarely used in the Stewart house (except when a Gaelic word could be substituted for an English word little boys were not supposed to hear). Mr. Stewart recalls going to some of the last Gaelic communion services held in the vestry when he was four or five years of age and he remembers "some of the old Scotsmen" being there. In 1913, with one of the first telephones in the district, the Stewarts became the recipients of many messages for their neighbours. Young Donald might have to deliver a message: "if I went over to Black Jim McPherson's and they didn't know I was there, they'd be talkin' Gaelic among themselves all the time."[37] The Gaelic-speaking McPhersons were Black Jim (d. 1915), Jennie (d. 1920) and Mary (d. 1946).[36]

In Crieff, the first Gaelic-speaking Highlanders arrived around 1830 and the last, somewhat before 1860. However, Gaelic survived until well into the twentieth century. That communion services were still celebrated in Gaelic until 1908 attests to the strength of the Scottish presence.

The landscape around Crieff (and other parts of Puslinch) undoubtedly reminded the Scots of home. In Puslinch, "the terrain, generally, is quite rolling, with short, sharp hills and many ponds and swales in the hollows and ravines."[39] Donald A. Stewart claims that "The Scots headed for the hills, the English got the good land and the Irish got the rest." This is likely just a saying passed down from his predecessors,* but, since the Scots were the first to arrive, they might have chosen a landscape that seemed familiar, one reminiscent of their native Highlands.

Crieff, by the 1870s, was a thriving, colonial-style Scottish community. Besides a Presbyterian church, the village boasted a number of residences including a manse, two stores, two blacksmiths shops, Jacob Kerracher's Hotel (licensed in 1862), a shoemaker and a school. During the building of the C.P.R. immediately to the south of the community, many workmen boarded in the hotel. Near the hotel was a Temperance Lodge.[41]

It appears that whisky was an important part of many settlers' lives. Peter Stewart writes,

> at one logging bee when whiskie was plentiful and good...I
> was driving a neighbours oxen and they were very heavy
> and lazie and I got tired driving them and in the afternoon
> I gave each ox a bottle of whiskie...and in the afternoon
> I had the liveliest team in the field.[42]

Stewart also sold whisky to earn extra money. With brothers David and Robert Allen, he hauled whisky from Guelph to Toronto. Beginning with a big load, Stewart writes,

> we sold whiskie on the way down [taking] four days on
> our way their and home we sold it out by the Barrel for
> 20e per gallon.[43]

According to Alex Fraser, March was the time of year for house and barn raisings. After the day's work, there would be "a dance every night, no violin music but the Irish or Scotch Bagpipes, whiskie Kilrae and good."[44]

Eraser undoubtedly refers to a local whisky of "legendary" quality. It was no secret that there was a still operated by Duncan "Lohiel" Cameron. "He distilled a brand of whisky known as Kilrae in a ravine north of the village, a liquor which attained distinction in places as far distant as Guelph."[45] The brew reportedly sold for 50 cents a gallon.

Cameron was caught, though the authorities did not find the Nvorm'. He was given a glass of his own whisky and asked if he knew whose it was. He reportedly replied, "I'm not sure but the fellow who made it shouldn't be stopped.""[6] Ironically the hotel and the Temperance Lodge burnt down together in 1878.[47]

Within the space of a few decades, the Scottish character of Crieff and neighbouring settlements had been firmly established. Due to the concentration of the Highland Scots, and the proliferation of the Gaelic language by and through the Presbyterian Church, the Scots at Crieff had developed a thriving Scottish community, one based on Celtic neighbourliness and goodwill.

From the evidence gathered about the origins and legacy of Scottish immigrations to Crieff, several conclusions may be drawn.

Forced by circumstances and the promise of a good future on the land, Gaelic speaking Highlanders left their home shires of Argyll, Inverness, Perth and Ross during the early 1830s. A group of Kintyre men met the original surveyor of Puslinch Township at York. This man, David Gibson, was instrumental in directing them to Killean. Many other Highlanders followed after the Killean land sale in 1832, until the First Concession including Crieff was filled by the early 1840s. After no more land was available, relatives continued to arrive from Scotland into the 1850s. There are examples of these relatives of the original settlers asking for or being sent financial assistance to emigrate to Canada. By the time the natives of the Isle of Uist arrived, land was no longer available and they squatted in roadside shanties.

By the 1870s Crieff was a thriving New World Scottish agricultural community. Thus, surrounded by Gaelic-speaking Highland brothers and sisters, the Scots built for themselves a new life rooted in Celtic tradition but looking to the future. The Scottish heritage and legacy of Crieff still lives on today.

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[1] For more information on the Tush-Pull' of immigration consult James A. Cameron, "The Role of Shipping from Scottish Ports in Emigration to the Canadas, 1815-1855." *Canadian Papers in Rural History,* ed. Donald H. Akenson (Gananoque, 1980) vol. II, pp. 136-139.

[2] *The New Statistical Account of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1845), vol. VII, p. 385.

[3] *Ibid.,* vol. VII, p. 386.

[4] *Ibid.,* vol. VII, p. 449-450.

[5] *Ibid.,* vol. X, p. 505.

[6] *Ibid.,* vol. X, p. 1155.

[7] *Ibid.,* vol. X, p. 1155-1156.

[8] *British Parliamentary Papers* (Shannon, 1970), vol. 16, 1842, p. 146.

[9] William McCormick *et al, Annals of Puslinch* (Acton, 1950), p. 43.

[10] Cleo Melzer, "Puslinch Past," *Puslinch Pioneer* (May 1981), V. 5, issue 9, p. 3.

[11] The following is taken from *The Historical Atlas of the County of Wellington, Ontario* (Toronto, 1906), p. 7. Most of what follows is also contained in Matthew McPhatter, ed., *Matthew McPhatter Letters* (Unpublished, circa 1897), no. 44, pp. 1-2.

> In 1832 in Toronto there were a number of lots on the first concession of Puslinch offered for sale by auction. David Gibson, who had surveyed Puslinch lived in Toronto near Neil McPhatter, Big John and Little John Thompson, who were on Yonge Street, and advised McPhatter and Big John Thompson to look at the lots, which they did, making the journey early in 1832 by way of Gait, and being shown the lots by Peter McBeath, who had assisted in the survey. At the sale in Toronto, lots 9 to 21, inclusive, were sold, every purchaser being a Kintyre man. The purchasers were Wm. Blue (step-son of Neil McPhatter), front lot 9, and all of 13; Arch. Thompson bought all of lot 10 for brother Little John Thompson; Big John Thompson bought all of lot 11; Gibson reserved front lot 12; John McNaughton bought rear lot 12; Neil McPhatter bought front lot 14 for his son Matthew, and rear of lot 14 for Malcolm McCormick, and all of lot 15 for himself; Alex McNaughton bought all of lot 16; Arch. McShannock bought front of lot 17 for his brother Alexander, and rear of lot 17 for his brother Donald; Malcolm Smith bought front lot 18, and his brother Hector rear lot 18; Malcolm, son of Neil McPhatter, bought front of lot 19; Big John Thompson bought front of lots 20 and 21 for his father, Neil Thompson.

[12] "Census and Assessment, 1835," *Township of Puslinch Municipal Records* (unpublished but deposited in the Ontario Archives), p. 2. At this time Gibson owned lot 1, front of Gore "corner lot in unsurveyed" Puslinch (McCormick *et al, op. cit* p. 53); lots 10 through 12, rear of Gore; and lot 12, front of Concession 1.

[13] These two lots, lot 11, rear of Gore and lot 12, front of Concession 1 are what remain of his 1835 holdings. "Mapof County of Wellington, Canada West" (Orangeville, 1861). The McDiarmids (also known as McDermid, McDermott and McDarmit) owned both lots 24 and 25, Front of Concession 1, later selling lot 25 to Allan Stewart. John McDermid, ST.. *Matthew McPhatter Letters,* no. 36, p. 1. "Map of County of Wellington,

Canada West" (1861). *Historical Atlas of County of Wellington, Ontario* (Toronto, 1906), pp. 44, 65. "Census and Assessment, 1834" *Puslinch Township,* p. 2. "Census and Assessment, 1835" *Puslinch Township,* p. 2. "Census and Assessment, 1837" *Puslinch Township,* p. 1. "Census and Assessment, 1838" *Puslinch Township,* p. 3. "Census and Assessment, 1839" *Puslinch Township,* p. 2. "Assessment, 1840" *Puslinch Township,* p. 2. McCormick *et al, op. cit,* p. 44.

15 Peter Stewart, *Matthew McPhatter Letters,* no. 51, p. 1.

16 Rev. Wm. Meldrum, *Matthew McPhatter Letters,* no. 26, p. 1-3.

17 John McPherson, *Matthew McPhatter Letters,* no. 45, pp. 1, 3.

18 *Historical Atlas of Wellington County, op. cit.",* p. 7

19 John Gilchrist, *Matthew McPhatter Letters,* no. 17a, p.l; no. 17b, p. 2.

20 British Parliamentary Papers, *op. cit.* "Emigration (Canada)," vol. 16, 1841, p. 157; "Colonial Land Sales and Emigration," vol. 16, 1843, pp. 388-400.

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22 "Archibald McCallum to William McCormick," *Matthew McPhatter Letters,* p. 1.

23 "Archibald McCormick to William McCormick, May 1845," *Matthew McPhatter Letters,* p.l.

24 "Archibald McCormick to William McCormick, Dec. 1843," *Matthew McPhatter Letters,* p.l.

25 "McCallum to McCormick," p. 2.

26 "McCallum to McCormick," p. 1.

27 Unfortunately this page of the letter has been torn and part lost. "McCallum to McCormick," p. 2.

28 "Killean Cemetery," *Puslinch Township - Cemeteries,* p. 4.

29 "Killean Cemetery (Presbyterian)"*Puslinch Township - Cemeteries* (Ontario Archives), p. 4.

30 McCormick *et al, op. cit.,* p. 53.

31 Alvin and Sheila McMurrich Koop, eds. *Older Voices Among Us.* (Erin, 1981), p. 18.

32 *Annals of Puslinch,* p. 43.

33 McCormick *et al., op. cit.,* p. 43.

34 Margaret McCormick, *The History of Knox Presbyterian Church Crieff* (1975), p. 11.

35 Rev. Wm. Meldrum, *Matthew McPhatter Letters,* no 26, p.3

36 William McCormick, Jr., *Matthew McPhatter Letters,* no. 35, p. 1.

37 Donald A. Stewart, *Interview* (1988 05 31).

38 "Crieff Cemetery (Knox Presbyterian Church)" *Puslinch Township - Cemeteries* (Ontario Archives), p. 3.

39 McCormick, *et al, op. cit.,* p.ll.

40 Donald A. Stewart, *Interviews* (1988 04 16, 1988 05 31).

41 McCormick *et al, op. cit.,* pp. 49-50.

42 Peter Stewart, *Matthew McPhatter Letters,* no. 51, pp. 2-3.

43 *Ibid.,* pp. 4-5.

44 Alex Fraser, *Matthew McPhatter Letters,* no. 15, p. 3.

45 McCormick *et al., op. cit.,* p. 50.

46 A. and S. Koop, eds., *op. cit.,* pp. 72-73.

47 McCormick *et al., op. cit.,* p.50.

REVIEWS

Raymond Grose, *History of the Grose Family*. Published by the author, R.R. 2, Alma, Ont. NOB 1AO, December 1990.

Unless the family is of great significance historically, genealogical studies are rarely of interest to those not members of the family. An important exception to this rule is *History of the Grose Family,* a large-format softbound volume of 312 pages. The author is able to trace his family back 13 generations to the sixteenth century. John Grose came to Peel Township from England in 1852, and members of the Grose family have resided there ever since. Mr. Grose traces the genealogy of his family down to his own immediate family, and has illustrated the book with historic and contemporary family photographs.

What makes this book valuable to Wellington County and rural historians is the large amount of space devoted to excerpts and summaries of diaries, filling 194 pages of the book, and written by three generations of the family: John Grose (1813-1896) covering the years 1893-95; his fourth son William S. Grose (1849-1943), for the years 1869-1941; and his grandson Emerson Grose (1894-1965) written 1914-1920. In addition, a series of historical articles written by William Grose for the Drayton Advocate in 1937 are included.

These diaries give a superb glimpse of the day-to-day lives of a farm family: their activities on the land, buying and selling on the local market, travel around the area, and grass-roots politics in the nineteenth century. Wellington County's historians are indebted to Mr. Grose for making the contents of these diaries available to a broad readership.

Steve Thorning

Anna Jackson, *Knox Crieff, One Hundred and Fifty Years of History.* Privately printed: 1991.

Written to celebrate its sesquicentennial, *Knox Presbyterian Church, Crieff, 1840-1990* is a valuable compilation of information from the west Puslinch area. It is a history of the congregation, "set in perspective against the secular and religious trends of the times", and of the families of that congregation.

The church formed in 1840, its members Scottish pioneers newly arrived. The service was first conducted in Gaelic.

Over the years, the congregation separated from the home church in Scotland, then united with the other Presbyterians churches in Canada but chose not to join with the Methodists. It grew until 1860 and a larger church had to built, but by 1880 the population had seriously declined, with the farms filled and the children off in search of their own farms, so it built the present, smaller one.

There were changes in the service over the years. Communion wine was replaced by grape juice and home baptisms disappeared, a choir and a controversial pipe organ were added and as the lives of the pioneers softened the church became more social and more luxurious.

People are an important part of this work. The reader becomes familiar with the ministers, especially the early Reverends John Bayne and Andrew Maclean. Important lay leaders, organizers and church workers are also named.

Useful to the family historian is the information provided about each family in the church. Taken from church, newspaper, township and private family records, the data may include dates of birth and death, marriage, occupation, place of origin, home location and burial site for over 130 family names. This book is also of interest to the reader who wishes to study the pioneers of Puslinch, as most of that first community would have attended here.

The story is well written and, with lots of entertaining anecdotes to illustrate the changing times, it is an enjoyable read.

Barb Mitchell

Udelle V. Wood, *Our Christian Heritage.* Goodwood: Privately printed, 1991.

This is a history of the Christian Church in Canada, now known as the Congregational Christian Church in Canada (and still sometimes confused with Bible Christian, Disciples of Christ or other Congregational denominations).

At the turn of the century, there were some 25 small, frame country churches, scattered around Southern Ontario and associated with the Christian Church in Canada. In Wellington County there was a major congregation at Drayton, and another, smaller one in Minto Township.

The church had its beginnings in the State of Virginia in 1794 among members of the Methodist Episcopal, Presbyterian and Baptist churches who were "dissatisfied and weary of the bickerings and ill feelings existing between persons of rival creeds..."

The group underwent several subsequent name changes. "Earnestly seeking a larger share of Christian liberty," they endeavoured to promote and encourage peace; they opposed alcohol, tobacco, slavery and the bearing of arms.

By 1821 representatives had come to Canada and in 1875 the Conference held its 50th Anniversary Conference in Drayton, where Thomas Garbutt (variously described as Brother, Elder or Reverend) was pivotal in organizing the largest congregation (125 members from 35 families).

Author Wood, Historian at the Stouffville Christian Church has compiled an intriguing scrapbook of materials. In addition to a useful tabulation of known congregations, she has included photocopy reproductions of the 1875 Drayton Conference Report in full, and the forty-seven page *Minister's and Church Member's Manual Containing the Constitution of the Conference of the Christian Church in Canada with the District Rules, Church Constitution, Regulations and Ceremonies, as amended by the Conference June 12th, 1884.* A large number of other documents are reproduced, as well as photographs of many of the church buildings and their ministers (including Garbutt).

As the farming communities in Ontario dwindled, so did the Christian Church population; some churches changed denomination, some closed (including Drayton, in the 1920s). It is a tribute to the energy and dedication of early church elders, such as Garbutt and his colleagues, that

the church persists, thinner perhaps in Ontario, but counting in its flock parishes from Nova Scotia to British Columbia.

Ian Easterbrook

Matthew McPhatter, *The McPhatter Letters.* Puslinch Historical Society, 1991.

This collection of fifty-eight "letters" originated in 1897, when Matthew McPhatter approached many older people in Puslinch Township, and collected their memories as individual letters.

The context in which to evaluate these sources lies within greater historical interest in the lives of ordinary people in the past These particular documents are peculiar in this regard in that they are both submissions from rural residents and Matthew McPhatier's recordings of what people said to him of their settlement experience.

These "letters" are an exceptional source where ordinary farmers talked about their life histories. Two qualities are especially important: both men and women relate what has happened to them; and, secondly, various nationalities are included. Notice, for instance the testimony of Silomie Borthwick, born in County Armagh, in the north of Ireland, and who had "responsibility for the farm" while her husband "being a stonemason, always worked at his trade in the summer".

These records rank in importance with the oral histories collected by the Koops in *Older Voices Among Us,* a little more than a decade ago. They are an important record, not just for the history of Wellington County, but for the history of rural Ontario as well.

Terry Crowley

REPORTS FROM THE ARCHIVES

MUTUAL LIFE OF CANADA ARCHIVES

The Mutual Life of Canada Archives was established in 1980 after the company had been in operation for 110 years. Thanks to the diligence of past employees, a large collection of old and interesting material has been preserved. To celebrate the company's 100th anniversary, historical documents and artifacts were gathered for a display; together they formed the nucleus of the collection. Since that time, documents have come to the Archives through a Records Management program, donations by retirees, and occasional purchases.

The collection includes Annual Reports, minutes from meetings of the Board of Directors, the Executive Committee, the Executive Officers' Committee, the Finance and Agency Committees, as well as agency histories and biographical files. Early ledgers contain information on debentures, bonds, mortgages, investments and loans. A large collection of advertising dating from the 1880s on is also available. The papers of senior management have also been deposited in the Archives.

Wellington County researchers will be interested in the records of early agencies and agents. It is worth mentioning that the company's second president, Robert Melvin, was a Guelph resident. He served as president from 1897 to 1908, after a 26-year term on the Board.

A PC-based database of photos has been created dating from about 1898 to 1989. It consists of almost 35,000 photos, the majority of which were used in company publications from 1951 to 1989.

The Archives is housed in company head office in Waterloo, and comprises 1600 square feet of office, research and storage space. Facilities-for photocopying and photo reproduction exist Access is granted to outside researchers, based on the material required and the reason for its use. For this reason, it is best to call ahead or make an exploratory call before arrival. The Archives is open by appointment, daily from 8:30 to 4:30.

Nancy Saunders Maitland

THE ARCHIVES AT ST. JOSEPH'S HOSPITAL AND HOME

St. Joseph's Hospital and Home in Guelph just completed its 130th anniversary year in 1991, making this organization one of the oldest in Guelph.

The archives really came together in 1986, when St. Joseph's celebrated its 125th Anniversary with a year-long series of events and projects. One of them was the compiling and cataloguing of the archives by Susan Weir-Cox, who now teaches elementary school in Kenilworth.

The archives of St. Joseph's is a rich treasure trove of artifacts, photos, documents, equipment, uniforms and other items. Each plays a part in the rich heritage of St. Joseph's and its service to the people of Guelph and Wellington County. Included in the collection are many photos and lists of graduates of the School of Nursing, from the turn of the century until the early 1970s, as well as records of grave markings from St. Joseph's cemetery.

St. Joseph's is interested in obtaining volunteer assistance from anyone who would be interested in updating and logging items that have been collected over the past few years. Some experience and knowledge would be helpful, as we need advice regarding what we should be storing in the archives today.

The archives are available for viewing by the public by appointment only. Please contact the Public Relations Department at 767-3426 if you would like more information.

Tim McClement

UNIVERSITY OF GUELPH LIBRARY ARCHIVAL AND SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

This year the Archives acquired a variety of interesting collections. The records of the Entomological Society of Ontario were deposited in June, 1990. They include bulletins, cashbooks, photographs, publications and correspondence from 1863-1980.

Minutes, newsletters, handbooks, posters, scrapbooks, correspondence and other items relating to the Guelph Trail Club arrived in April. The club was formed in 1972 and has been responsible for the creation

and maintenance of several trails, including the Speed River and Arkell/Starkey Loop Trails.

Three new collections pertaining to regional sports history were recently donated. Both the Hanna family and McMillan family papers contain information concerning the Guelph Maple Leaf—Canadian Professional Hockey League. Stan Hanna was involved with the team from 1929 to 1930, and Norm McMillan was a player on the Professional Hockey League. The records of the Guelph Curling Club 1957-1990 were also deposited in October, 1991. These papers include files describing the history of the club, which began in 1838.

The exciting and extensive Edward Johnson Collection was transferred from the National Archives to the University in March. Edward Johnson, who was born in Guelph in 1878, went on to become a world-famous tenor. His records include correspondence, diaries, daybooks, programmes, scrapbooks, photographs and other memorabilia reflecting his operatic career. His daughter, Fiorenza, and her husband George Drew are also represented by various letters, photographs and newspaper clippings which emphasize their close relationship to Johnson.

The Rockwood Academy Collection, another representation of regional history, includes a fascinating array of documents, photographs, books and other materials concerning the school, founded in 1850 by an English Quaker, William Wetherald. The impressive stone building was purchased and restored in the 1960s by the artist Josef Drenters, who gathered a tremendous amount of information relating to its history. This material has been donated to the Archives by the artist's brother Andreas Drenters.

The Clarke E Leverette collection consisting of over 75,000 stereographs are being indexed individually. The patron will be able to access a complete series by using the public computer terminals, and for individual cards, a manual finding aid can be referred to. The library received numerous individual items which were either transferred, donated or purchased, including Alexander Geddes' day journal, Harbour Master's Record Book from Meaford, and notebooks of Guelph poet and journalist Hereward Kirby Cockin.

All in all, 1991 was a very busy and productive year for the Archives, University of Guelph.

Gloria Troyer

WELLINGTON COUNTY ARCHIVES

The Wellington County Museum and Archives local history collection increased by 57% in 1991 due to a record number of private donations and government record transfers.

Recent acquisitions include municipal records for the Township of Minto and the Village of Clifford, comprised of birth, marriage and death registers, minute books, bylaws and tax assessment rolls, useful for students of local history.

As part of a de-centralization program at the Archives of Ontario, historic municipal records relating to Wellington County were transferred to the Museum and Archives. This transfer was the result of a program aimed at encouraging community archives to retain their local records. Records deposited included Nichol Township minute books detailing Council activities 1832 to 1857, and tax rolls for 1843 and 1844. Other records included Harriston tax rolls for the period 1877 to 1929, and non-resident tax rolls for the Village of Elora compiled in the late 1860's. The oldest record acquired in this transfer was an 1841 hand-written notebook kept by the Treasurer of the District of Wellington.

Over 100 years of Mount Forest newspapers were also acquired by the Wellington County Museum and Archives in 1991. In addition to back issues of *The Confederate,* the newspaper collection included early issues of The Mount Forest *Representative,* and *The Index,* which had a brief publishing history from 1884 to 1886. In total, the newspapers document the weekly activities in the Mount Forest area from 1870 to 1973.

Our holdings of business records were enhanced by the acquisitions of minute and account books for the Harriston Flax Company 1897 to 1907, and the Harriston Joint Stock Butter and Cheese Company covering the period from 1891 to 1912.

An extensive collection of floor plans and business records for the International Malleable Iron Company of Guelph was also donated.

Researchers will be pleased to note the donation of John McNeety's marriage register for the Mission of Maryborough and Peel Townships for 1860 to 1866. Researchers interested in Arthur Township should note the archives now holds Arthur Township school records consisting of minutes and cashbooks for sixteen school sections from 1885 to 1962.

In 1991 over 2,300 people from across North America accessed the research collection of the Wellington County Museum and Archives through personal visits, telephone requests and correspondence. Everyone with an interest in local history is invited to visit the facility, located midway between Fergus and Elora.

Bonnie Callen

OUR CONTRIBUTORS

Ralph Beaumont is Manager of Information Services with the Grand River Conservation Authority. **Stephen Thorning,** an Elora historian and writer, is currently a member of the Town Council. His popular column "Valuing Our History" appears weekly in the *Elora Sentinel.* **Peter Templin,** formerly of Fergus, retired from teaching high school mathematics in Kitchener.

The Reverend **Eric Griffin** is pastor at Grace Church, Anglican, Arthur. The Reverend **Donna J. Mann** ministers to Knox United Church and Zion United Church in Durham. **Mark Spencer** was born in Puslinch; he works in the University of Waterloo Library.

Professor **Terry Crowley** teaches with the Department of History, University of Guelph. **Barb Mitchell** lives in Drayton, where she writes for the *Wellington County Advertiser.* Ian Easterbrook,with a team from the University of Guelph, is co-ordinating a research project on Canadian film.

Bonnie Callan is Archivist with the Wellington County Museum and Archives. **Gloria Troyer** is a Library Associate with the University of Guelph's McLaughlin Library, where she works in Archives and Special Collections. **Nancy Saunders Maitland** is Corporate Archivist with Mutual Life of Canada in Waterloo. **Tim McClemont** is Director of Public Relations with St. Joseph's Hospital and Home, Guelph.

The sketch of the Shand Dam reproduced on our front cover was drawn for the Grand Valley Stamp Club by the late Russell Ptyley, a commercial artist employed for many years by Beatty Bros. Ltd., Fergus. Another version of the sketch appears in the circular logo found on the back cover, reproduced from Beanys *Views and News,* September 1942, with permissioa

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Page design and layout: Kathleen Scott
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Premier Mitchell Hepburn and Capt. Roberts, Brantford, Secretary of Grand River Conservation Commission were escorted to the platform by Side Drummers Lou Mason (left—now enlisted) and Colin Mason of the Fergus Kiltie Band, and Primer Department.

It Was a Grand Event

Many Beatty Factory and Office employees were in the crowd of 3,500 who saw Premier Hepburn officially open the $2,000,000.00 dam on the Grand River. It was an impressive way of publicly acknowledging the successful completion of this huge project and of expressing appreciation of the efforts of those who pioneered it.

Two Fergus citizens, Mr. Robt. Kerr (uncle of Mr. R. D. Kerr, Company Director and Treasurer) and Mr. Hugh Templin, Editor of Fergus News Record are original members of the commission.

Fergus Kiltie and Citizens Bands took a prominent part in the ceremonial proceedings. Many members of both bands are Beatty employees. Factory and Office were also well represented at the big street dance in the evening. Music by Dick Walker's orchestra was provided through the generosity of Mr. Rayner, head of the Rayner Construction Company Limited, who built the dam. It was a most enjoyable affair.

The local Philatelic Club supplied Elora and Fergus post offices with a special cancellation stamp to commemorate the opening of the dam. Hundreds of outgoing letters received this mark of distinction and will be treasured keepsakes in years to come.

Some Members of Philatelic Club

Reg. Manley (Foreman Shell Box), W. D. Hill (Ont. Br. Cdt. Mgr.), Francis Mattaini (Power Pumps), J. C. Bricker (Elora Postmaster), F. Frankish (Furniture Finisher, Mundell's).

Head Office **Fergus, Ont.**