

"THE TORONTO CARRYING PLACE"

By

Mrs. Wm. Willoughby
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The earliest recorded history of this area is found in Percy J. Robinson's book "Toronto during the French Regime"; in which in full detail the "Toronto Carrying Place". is described.

This portage thirty miles in length, formed a link between Lake Ontario and the Upper Lakes. It ran from the mouth of the Humber River to the west branch of the Holland River. It was always traversed on foot, and saved a detour of hundreds of miles over exposed waters of the Great Lakes. This was no ordinary Indian trail, but a main thoroughfare as old as human life in America.

After crossing Bloor St. east of Jane St., it followed closely the course of the Humber. It swung to the east of Duncan Creek. Keeping east of the river, it crossed a small stream one and a half miles south of Purpeville. Swinging west, it crossed the east branch of the Humber close to the spot where the road crosses it today at the little village of King Creek. To the north of this ford the trail enters a wilder region, swinging to the east of the 6th. concession road, north of Hackett Lake., and crossing a height of land 1,150 feet above sea level (ridges of King). Keeping slightly to the east to avoid the sources of the numerous small streams flowing northward into the Holland River, the trail ran north a little east of the 6th. concession. The end of the Carrying Place where Simcoe camped is a quarter of a mile south-west of the northern extremity of the 6th. concession road.

Robinson describes the trail as follows:

"Toronto Carrying Place for a century and a half before the arrival of John Graves Simcoe, possesses a history, which, though little known, is always dramatic and picturesque; it is the history of the wilderness, the fur-trade, of the wars and cruelties of the Iroquois, of the adventures of explorers and missionaries, of the discovery of the Mississippi Valley and the Great North West.

By the beginning of the 17th. century the French explorers under Champlain had set up a colony in Quebec, and had made friends of the Huron Indians and enemies of the Iroquois. The Huron hunting grounds fronted on the shores of Lake Ontario and extended to Lake Simcoe; but their fortified villages lay north in the Midland district. Only encampments were built in the hunting area; the one in this district being at Hackett Lake. The Iroquois, the Hurons worst enemies dwelt on the south shore of Lake Ontario in New York State. Continual warring was carried on between these two tribes with the French assisting the Hurons.

Among Champlain's party was a young Frenchman named Etienne Brulé. Winning favour among the Hurons, he was taken into their tribe, and became like them in every respect. On September 8, 1615, Brulé, in company with twelve Huron warriors travelled down the Carrying Place to seek assistance of the Andastes Indians who lived in eastern Pennsylvania in war against the Iroquois. Brulé was the first white man to cross the Toronto Carrying Place, discover Lake Ontario and view the site of the City of Toronto.

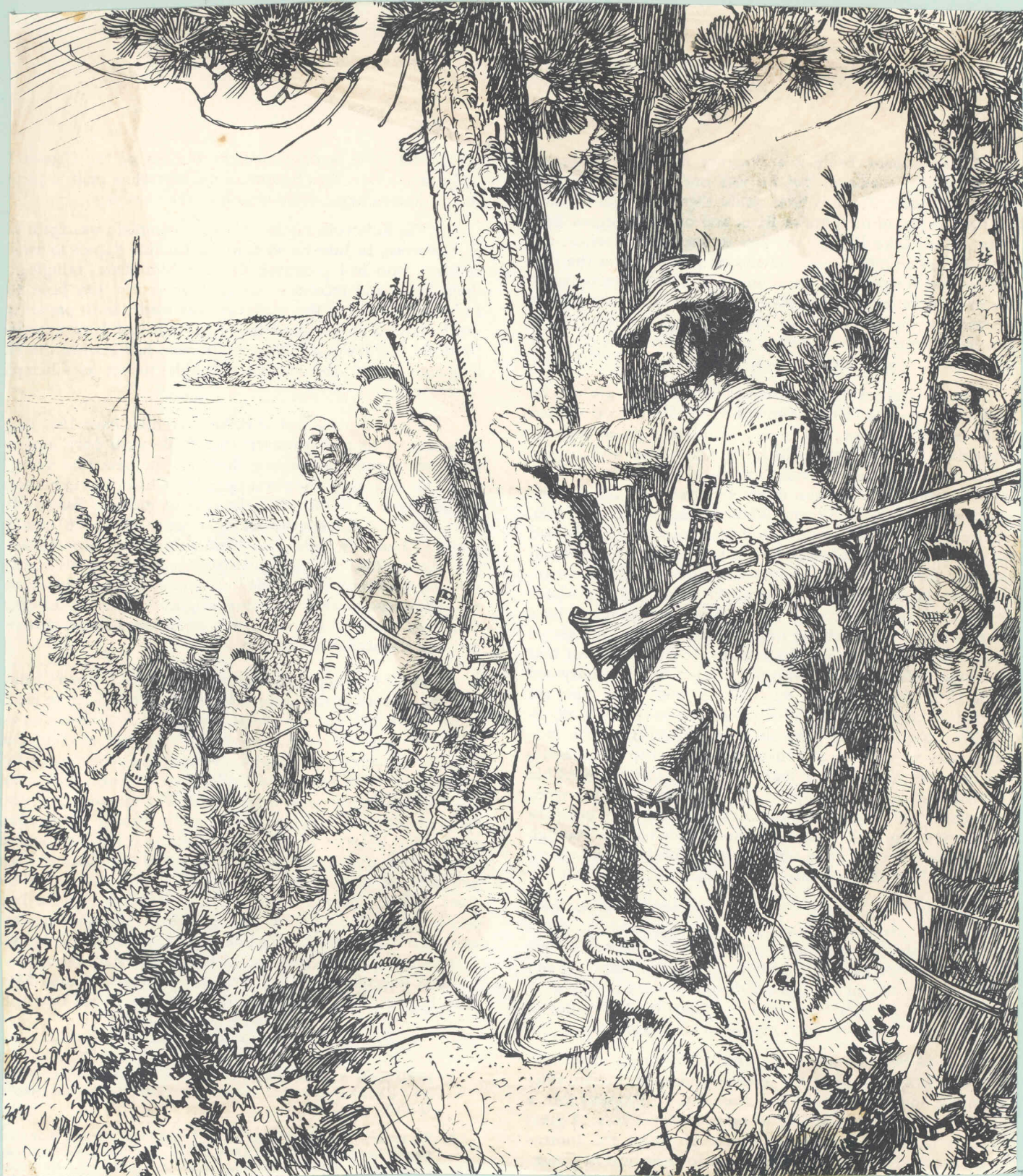
Two Jesuit missionaries, Brebeuf and Charmant, passed this way in the Spring of 1641 on their way back to Fort Ste. Marie, after spending a winter with the Neutrals. About 1895 a small Jesuit stone was found in Vaughan township, in lot 24, concession 5 with the date 1641 carved on it.

By 1649 the Hurons were driven from the land along the Carrying Place; and the Iroquois held undisputed possession of the lands lying between Lake Ontario and Lake Simcoe until the end of the 17th century. This part of the country abounded in fur-bearing animals, and the Carrying Place was used mainly by fur traders.

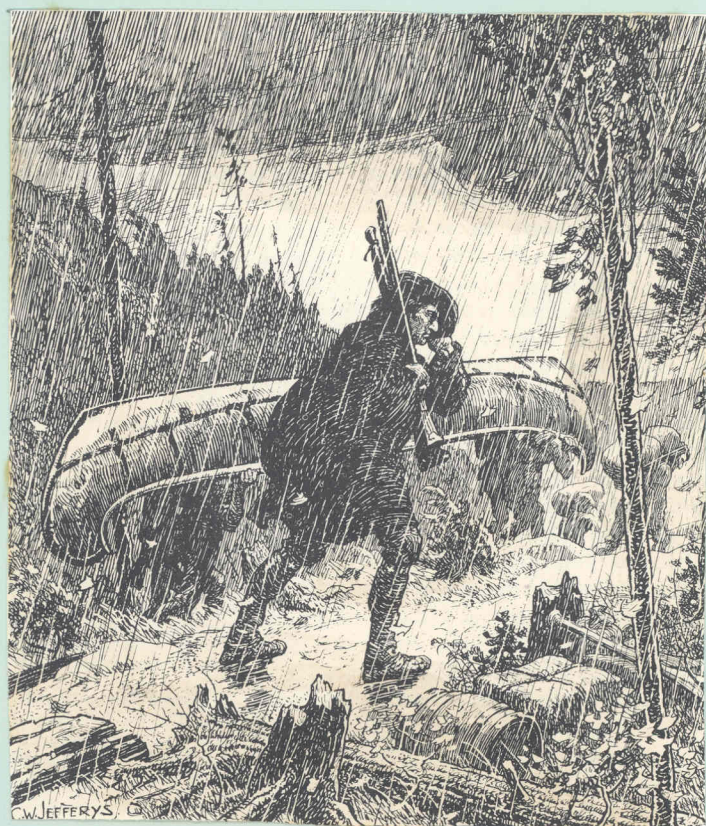
In 1680 LaSalle first crossed the Carrying Place from south to north; then twice in 1681. He found it the shortest route between Lake Ontario and Lake Huron, and a sheltered route in stormy weather. In his account of the trip up the Carrying Place, LaSalle wrote "All baggage must be carried over the crest of very high mountains"--a glowing tribute to the ridges of King. It is also possible LaSalle crossed this route again in 1683 after descending the Mississippi. The Carrying Place may be proud of so many historical memories of this remarkable man.

By 1758 the French had abandoned their trading post at the mouth of the Humber River. The Iroquois had gone back to the south shore of Lake Ontario; and the Mississauga Indians had drifted down from the north to replace them. By 1760 the English were settled at Toronto, and they soon realized the importance of the Carrying Place as the safe way to the Upper Great Lakes. On September 23, 1787, a meeting took place on the Bay of Quinte between the English and Mississaugas. Sir John Johnson was the Indian agent at this time. About one third of York County, including nearly 140 square miles of King Township was purchased from the Indians for the sum of seventeen hundred pounds in cash and goods. 1,107 Indians had an interest in this transaction.

In 1791 the Canada Act was passed, Upper Canada became an Independent province, with John Graves Simcoe as its first Lieutenant-governor. In 1793 Simcoe visited Lake Huron by way of the Carrying Place. A member of Simcoe's party said of the Carrying Place "the scenery was fit for pictures the whole way". In 1794 Governor Simcoe chose and surveyed the route of Yonge Street; and after its opening in 1796, the Humber-Holland route was abandoned. The townships were immediately settled after the Canada Act, and the original trail soon vanished except at its northern terminus in the Holland River marsh.



ETIENNE BRULE AT THE MOUTH OF THE HUMBER, 1615



LA SALLE ON THE TORONTO CARRYING-PLACE, 1681



THE HISTORY OF EVERSLEY

By

Miss A. A. Fergusson.

Eversley stands at the Intersection of The Third of King, two and a half miles north of the townline of King and Vaughan. It is the centre of a fine agricultural district, dotted with lakes and bathed in the warmth of its sunlit fields. It slopes to the south of the Humber River and to the ridges of King to the north.

Possibly the beginning of Eversley was a store on the north east corner, and a large dwelling house attached. Mr. James Tinline was the storekeeper, and we take for granted that the Tinline family lived in the house, as Mr. Tinline Sr. taught the school for some years. His daughter, our dear, much-respected teacher, Miss Elizabeth Tinline, may have grown up there.

As we remember Eversley, a blacksmith shop stood on the south-east corner.....

The Smith, a mighty man was he,
With large and sinewy hands
And the muscles of his brawny arms
Were strong as iron bands.

On the north west corner stood a wheelwright's shop, presided over by Mr. Robert Reddeth, whose son, Rev. J. J. Reddeth, was a prominent Methodist preacher. His dwelling stood to the north, and north of that was the Hugh Mitchell home. Mr. Mitchell was known as Dr. Tick, as his work was to clean the flocks of sheep from their troublesome sheep ticks. The family were musical and the hymns and psalms on Sundays were led by Dr. Tick's powerful voice, assisted by his family.

Next to the store stood a dwelling where different families lived in our memory. Mr. and Mrs. McKellar retired there in their old age. Later Mrs. P. Gellatly and her daughters, Bessie and Maggie, a highly respected and much loved family kept the post office and a small store later on as the large store was burned down.

Next to this stood the Baptist Church, where the Norman Hutchinson's and other families worshipped. Later on this church was moved to King, where Bethel Baptist services are now conducted by Rev. Mr. Hart.

South of the blacksmith shop stood two homes, one for the blacksmith, whom we remember as Mr. Kitchen, and later Alex. Hurst and his family. The next house and the cheese factory below it housed the families of the Eversley cheesemakers.

The name Eversley is possibly named for a little village in England. Eversley Anglican Church was the church where Charles Kingsley was curate. We remember him as the writer of "Westward Ho." I always think of him in my mind as living next to our Stone Church in the red brick manse of the Tawse family.

The pioneer families included--Rodgers, who owned the 200 acre farm with the large red brick house east of the corner. Mr. Timothy Rodgers raised a family of noted men. Dr. David Rodgers of Newmarket, and the best dentist for a large district around, Dr. Billy Rodgers. Also to the north on a fine farm, Jimmie Rodgers. Also Henry Rodgers, who took over the store for some years, until he left it for the farm, where he died, leaving Thomas Cairns to carry on. He, with Mrs. Rodgers, Aunt Jessie, as she was lovingly called, retired to Aurora, where she died at the age of 94.

Then there were the Wells, probably of United Empire Loyalists stock. Shall we devote a separate chapter to the Wells?

The Fergusons, Scotts, Lloyds, Tawses and Folliotts occupied farms.

THE WELLS

Judge Dalton Wells. Does that name mean anything to You? Had you lived on the Third of King from Eversley down during the last century, you would have known the name of Wells. That was a pioneer family. There were two of the older families, John and Joel and their descendants. I remember old Mrs. John Wells, who, in her old age lived at Eversley in the house in which their grandson Lyle Wells, lives now.

Their sons were Joel and James. Joel owned the south east corner farm and had a red brick house. He built a cheese factory at the south of Eversley. The fame of Eversley cheese was known far and wide. The farmers were out early with their wagons of milk cans going to the cheese factory. After the milk was weighed and the cans emptied into the big tank, the farmers drove a little further to the whey pump and filled the cans with whey for the pigs.

Half way down the west side, was the farm of Mr. James Wells. He also lived in a red brick house. Later it was taken down and the present white brick dwelling was erected. I believe that all the red brick houses were built of bricks burned on the farms. They certainly were large and well built.

Besides the two Well's red brick, and the large Rodgers, there was the Scott home, the Manse, a neat cottage in which the Tawse family lived, also the two sons of Joel Wells, Pearson and Gabriel lived in the very large solid brick house. Now these are painted white.

Mr. William Wells, oldest son of James Wells is still living. He was reeve of King for some years and lived on his farm north of Temperanceville in a red, brick house.

Farther down on the Third, Pearson Wells lived on his fine farm, through which the Humber ran on its way from Lake Wilcox down to Toronto Bay. The railway tracks cut the farm in two on the South. It is now a forestry demonstration, and very beautiful with its blue spruce and scotch pine.

Pearson Wells represented the Liberals for North York in the Federal Government in

Ottawa, for a term. He was highly esteemed. His eldest son was Dr. John Wells, a dentist. He suffered from epilepsy and often was unable for his work. He had married Josephine Erwin and she studied dentistry in Canada, and was a good one too. Their son, Dalton C. Wells, was the first Judge Dalton Wells of whom we spoke, a Judge of the Supreme Court of Canada. So lift up your heads a little higher, ye people of Eversley, for a judge has come from your ranks.

Gabriel Wells, brother of Pearson. lived on the farm west, also in a fine red, brick house. He and Pearson Wells, were Disciples of Christ, and attended the church in Aurora, of that denomination. Gabriel Wells built a church on the King corner of his farm, and though in my memory, was not used as a church. It still stands as a church on the north boundry of King, and is known as the old church.

The James Wells, were Presbyterians and worshipped in the Stone Church, built on the south east corner of the James Wells' farm. The red brick Manse was north of the church, the first resident Minister was Rev. John Tawse. He came from Scotland. He had been married three times, and had two daughters, Mary and Georgina. The latter became the wife of Rev. Dr. James Carmichael. Also a son, John, who owned the farm opposite the church. The present school was built on one acre of his farm. The grandchildren of Rev. Tawse still occupy the manse, which was re-built several years ago.

One of the earliest district churches and the oldest of the Presbyterian charges, Eversley congregation was founded in 1834. The present stone church was erected in 1848, and is a landmark of early architectural of the gothic design. The cemetary surrounding from 1837 to 1877, a period of 40 years. The cemetary surrounding the church holds the remains of Rev. John Tawse, minister from 1837 untill 1877, a period of 40 years.

Eversley Presbyterian Church was an offshoot of Newmarket Presbyterian Church. The first church at Eversley was a log structure. It was to be used for divine service on Sundays and for a school during the week. Rev. John Tawse was the teacher. Young men and maidens attended during the winter, adding to their store of knowledge. If any of the young men desired to go further, Rev. Tawse was a grand tutor and gave them every assistance. Among the young men of letters, who rose to prominence was Andrew Yule, who became a school teacher, later the reeve of Aurora, and a highly respected man there. Another man of letters was Frederick Burrows. He became a school teacher, and then a chief inspector of Toronto schools and died only a few years ago. He was a poet of some renown. I have copies of some of his poems. Others, too, got a start from that fine old preacher, Rev. John Tawse.

Sometimes a couple would call to be married. Mr. Tawse would send the children to the back of the room while he conducted the ceremony. At the back of the room, the young men would edge up to the young girls and go through the ceremony with them. I often wondered if any of those couples married in later years.

The log church was replaced by the present stone one, and the school was later replaced by the present white brick one across the road.

I attended both schools. Miss Alice Smeltser was the first teacher. She was the first cousin of Parnham Wells, son of Pearson Wells, and later became his wife. On that first Arbor Day, a new institution, a row of cedars across the front was planted, a living testimony to her memory. No doubt Mr. Parnham Wells assisted in the work.

In the old brick school we had a succession of teachers, all men, and very fine teachers. My brother, Thomas, attended as a wee boy, when a Mr. March was teacher. He may have been good with the older pupils, but gave little attention to the little ones. Thomas used to tell how Martha Curts who was in his class, returned after being absent for a day, and asked him for a lesson. In the first book, they had the first lesson long enough, so he showed her the next one, and the teacher did not know the difference.

My first teacher was Frank Stiver, who, with his charming wife, lived in the part of the store dwelling. I remember when the Rev. Mr. Grant lived in that apartment with his family. He was the first baptist preacher. Later when Mr. Henry Rodgers gave up the store for the farm, Mr. Stiver became storekeeper. He also dealt in organs -- the Uxbridge Organ Co. He sold several of the first organs in the community. My first organ was one of these. It cost \$75.00. The whole family took music on it. The teacher was Miss Izzie Norman, whose home was in King, where Mr. Burt now lives.

After Mr. Stiver, came Mr. Mathew Harry Thompson. The Thompson family lived on the farm north of the new school house. Mr. M.H. Thompson and his family lived in the house where Mr. and Mrs. McConnell now live. After some years he was transferred to Aurora as principal of the public school. He was a good teacher and a strict disciplinarian. Miss Smeltser was the first woman teacher, but since her time we have had a succession of good women teachers.

One of the finest teachers was Archie Campbell. He was very much esteemed. He became Inspector of North York, and passed away a few years ago. He suggested to me that I try for entrance, a rather unusual thing in those days. My brother Henry and Albert were attending high school, but with the cost of the board and room I did not expect to be able to go on. I went up to Newmarket on December 20

and passed first in the 92 pupils trying, so later my turn came to go to Aurora High School, eventually to Model and Normal. Later in 1913-1914, I taught at Eversley School, thoroughly enjoying the youth of those years.

Now we shall tell of the Ferguson Clan and the Scotts, for they became very close in marriage. Mr. Thomas Scott came from Scotland with his brother Walter (later of South Aurora), his brother Robert, his sister Mr. John Yule, and his old mother - Granny. He was a pioneer blacksmith and built a home and shop on the south west corner of the Third, a block south of Eversley. His brother Robert learned the trade with him, as did other young men. Nearly every implement used on the farm was made by the blacksmith - the iron plows, harrows etc.

The charcoal used in the smithy was burned in the field below the house. The farms were covered with forests. The huge trees were cut down: a large pit was dug, and the logs heaped high in this pit. The earth was thrown over the logs until they were well covered, only a few spaces left where the fire could be laid. Men had to be there day and night. If the fire broke through more earth covered the hole. So the logs were completely burned to make charcoal. Mr. Scott has filled his shed with new charcoal. On the night of March 4th, the whole lot of buildings were burned to the ground - the coal shed, the blacksmith shop, and the dwelling house. Kind neighbours gave shelter to the women and children. There were four wee Scotts at the time - my mother Agnes, known as Nancy, Walter, Helen and wee Jeannie.

On the east corner stood a tavern owned by the Raffartys. Mr. Raffarty had brought a farm. There was a large family, of big boys, and in order to supplement the income they built an extra room to house the bar. It was not a good move, for the boys were good customers and were often seen fighting outside. A new license was needed and names needed to request one. Mr. Scott would not sign for the license. A strange man had been at the tavern a few days before. The night of the fire he disappeared, and the surmise was that he had the fire set and then fled, as he was never seen or heard of again.

Old Mr. Raffarty was a good neighbour and rode his old horse down to the Roman Catholic Church in Richmond Hill on a Sunday morning. When calling on his

neighbours and they would ask 'How are you Mr. Raffarty?', he would reply, 'Still striving to be better'. As he needed money to make a payment on his farm he borrowed money from Mr. George Hartman, east of Aurora. One morning Mr. Hartman rode over to see Mr. Raffarty. He found him working in the field. They exchanged greetings and Mr. Raffarty explained that he was unable to make a payment at present, but invited Mr. Hartman in to dinner. 'There may not be much more but potatoes and buttermilk' he said, 'but you are welcome to it.' So Mr. Hartman shared in the dinner and the two men parted good friends. In time Mr. Raffarty paid the mortgage. Raffarty's Corner was later known as Al Wells' Corner; now Dr. J.T. Phair, Ontario's Deputy Minister of Health lives there.

On the south east corner was the Ferguson home. Mr. Thomas Ferguson married a Glasgow lady, Catherine Kerr. They left Ayr, where Bobby Burns was born in a Ferguson cottage, and sailed for America. After a long sailing voyage they reached New York and remained there until their son John was born. Later they came to Upper Canada, and settled on a farm below Richmond Hill, later known as the Kail Farm, now the home of the great telescope, the OBSERVATORY. There their family increased. Thomas, Hugh and Alex, possibly Margaret joined the family there.

In 1826 Mr. Ferguson bought 400 acres in King, from the Third to Temperanceville. The first 200 acres were kept as a homestead, the next 100 acres were sold to Barnes Beynon, and the rest to Henry Stewart, my great-great grandfather.

Mr. Ferguson was a weaver by trade and his fingers had woven the fine, silken Paisley shawls in Scotland. To cut down the forest and hew out a home was not easy for him. He wove the sheep's wool into blankets and underwear, shirts and pants, to keep out the winter cold. In exchange the neighbours helped him in the making of lumber and building a home. Apparently not a log house was erected, but a full-sized stucco house. In those days the house was built from the ground up, no cellars, but an outside brick cellar for keeping milk and potatoes, apples and preserved fruits. Later, after a century of occupation by the Fergusons, a cellar, the full size of the house was dug by Thomas in 1896. In the cornerstone of this cellar Thomas placed the local papers, Aurora Banner, Toronto Globe and Mail etc.

I contributed the following lines,

When Grandfather Ferguson built this home,
He built it without a cellar.
He said, 'This is good enough for me,
I'll leave that job for another feller.
Within this house was Thomas born,
This house without a cellar.
Within this house was Thomas born,
And he was the other feller.'

In fact five youngsters of us were born in that house without a cellar. Only I was born in the pantry. Besides the Fergusons, mentioned before, others were born in King - Catherine, Mark and Mary Larmont. The Ferguson family grew. The eldest son John bought the farm at Eversley on the south west corner - a sunny acre farm.

For long years the corner field was the forest. On July 1st a great picnic was held there. Big picnic tables, big swings for the children, the Aurora band under the leadership of Sylvanus Lundy, and series of games. It was the big event of the season. In later years the trees were cut down, leaving a level field. Besides the fifty acre farm were ten additional acres at the west known as the Mill Pond. It was dammed up and a heavy plank sluice was built and a lumber mill erected. In the winter the farmers cut what trees were wanted to make lumber and John Ferguson and his wife, Margaret Stewart hired them at the sawmill and after the chores were finished they turned the water from the millrace over the big wheel and cut the logs into lumber. So a striving industry was carried on.

The millpond was a continuation of the lake north of it, known then as Ferguson's Lake, now Lady Eaton's Lake. On the 24 of May holiday the pond was alive with fishermen. All the youngsters around went to the pond to fish. There were sunfish, perch, catfish and shiners. One day Thomas and Henry took their fishing poles for a day's fishing at the millpond. They returned home at night tired but happy with a catch of 99 fish, all catfish but 6 which were sunfish, and all a goodly size. They were sweet eating. It was quite a chore to clean 99 fish, but everyone helped at least with the eating. This millpond was partly on the north side of the road bridge on Walter Scott's farm.

He owned two hundred acres, the length of the block from the 4th of Eversley. The second hundred had been the Bovair farm, but was sold to Walter Scott. Long years afterwards it was sold to Sir Henry Pellatt, and later became part of Eaton Hall farm. Mr. Scott retired to Aurora where he died, also his wife, leaving two daughters and one son.

A great gate led from the road into the logyard. It was used not only by the loggers but by the Thomas Scott family. When Mr. Scott had been burned out at Raffarty's Corners, Mr. Ferguson gave the family the use of the large parlor and bedroom attached until they built another home, known as Scott's Wha Hae, now owned by Harry McBride. The brick Blacksmith shop stood on the corner for many years. I suppose James Fraser took it down.

The Scott family increased in size, so he bought the farm behind John Ferguson's for his family. He built a blacksmith shop in the field near the big red brick house, where he could shoe his horses or fix his implements. He married Alison Stewart, daughter of Henry of Temperanceville. They had 15 children. The oldest Agnes married the youngest Ferguson son, Mark. Mr. Walter Scott Sr., brother of Thomas Scott, married Margaret Ferguson, my father's sister, and they first settled on a farm up the 2nd of King, later on a farm south of Aurora where the CNR cuts through. Both my grandfather and Uncle Walter had black, crisp curly heads and beards, while their brother Robert was like a golden god with pale gold, silken curls. Robert studied for the ministry and was for long a fine Presbyterian Minister. In his blacksmithing days he was engaged to be married to Mary Larmon Ferguson, my father's youngest sister, but Mary took a heart attack and was dead before Robert knew of her illness.

The Thomas Scott home with its deep veranda to the south, stood west of the mill and the width of a field from the road. So he used the lane into the millyard, then up a lane to the barn, which meant opening and closing three gates. Yet the young men who drove in to win the winsome Scott girls, did not seem to mind the job of jumping in and out of their buggies. John F. Scott, the youngest son became a Presbyterian Minister. Henry Scott died in his young manhood as he prepared to study for the ministry.

Mr. Thomas Ferguson, second son of the pioneer father, the weaver, also bought a farm one and a quarter miles, or one block north of Eversley. The farm

later became known as the T.K. Ferguson Farm, with a pond on the side next to the road. There most of his family were born. But he had a desire to own at least a part of a lake on a farm lower down, so he bought the farm now owned by Lady Eaton and called it Forest Home and the lake was known as Ferguson's Lake. It was a beautiful farm with a row of walnut trees up the lane. The forest was kept as a shelter and a beauty spot, and it still stands in its primeval beauty.

His sons owned farms in the neighbourhood. There was the T.K. Farm, the John Ferguson farm, the Hugh Ferguson farm and lake, and later William Ferguson, who farmed the homestead. Mr. Thomas Ferguson, the father retired to King where he built the brick home now owned by Dr. Hardy. Lady Eaton bought the Ferguson farm and added it to the neighbouring farms. It is now a thing of beauty, a great achievement. A CANADIAN PRODUCT.

The Fergusons had thought of supplying their lake with fish, so applied to the government Game and Fisheries Department. At that time they were interested in carp, so they sent enough carp fishlets to supply the lake. This was a sad mistake, as few people care for carp and they hug the mud at the bottom of the lake and are difficult to catch. We believe that Jewish people like them. Along one shore of the lake was a layer of white clay. Men would come and dig up a pail of this white clay to use as a whitewash for their outhouses and cellars. A sample was sent away to the government to enquire as to it being used in quantity, but nothing was done about it. So it is probably there until this day.

Mr. Thomas Ferguson married Francis Wade, daughter of old Philip Wade, of the farm down the Third, across from the Fergusons. Mr. Wade used to use the ash of those old forests to make potash, a clear, solid produce used in the manufacture of soap. We apparently made a good product which sold well.

My good mother was cutting up some potash for soap making, and some find pieces flew around. I, as children often do, picked up this 'candy' put it in my mouth to lick. My mother quickly filled my mouth with butter, thus saving my throat from burning.

North of Eversley, next to the Timothy Rodgers farm, was the George Norman Wade farm. A beautiful farm with a big, red brick house. Mr. Norman later

moved to King and built the house which is now the Baptist parsonage. The farm was sold to Mr. Peter Bovair who married Eliza Scott. Their youngest son, Arthur, lives there now with his wife, a son Ross and his wife, while the second son Scott owned and worked the farm which backs to it, facing the second.

The farm north of the Norman farm and south of the James Rogers farm was the Hutchinson farm. After the passing of the parents it was farmed by the son, James Hutchinson. Later it was bought by Mr. Alex McLennan, the present owner.

South of the Ferguson farm was the Maple Avenue farm, situated on the south east corner of Raffarty's Corners. On the map of the County of York, published in 1861 is the Ferguson Homestead farm, named by Alec Ferguson, Maple Avenue Farm. He was my father's next older brother, and planted the rows of sugar maple trees and an inner row of other varieties which have long since disappeared - balm of gileads, mountain ash, pines, which I remember as a child. Grandmother Scott picked the buds of the balm of gilead and made a wonderful healing salve.

The farm joining our on the south was the Thomas Wood farm. Mrs. Wood was a Trench, a lady from Scotland. With her lived her adopted niece Jean Trench, who later married James Ness and inherited the Wood Ha' farm.

Thomas Ness, the oldest son of Mr. and Mrs. Ness, opened an electric business in Montreal. His brother Walter and Andrew and my brother Walter went to Montreal and were employed by T.W. Ness there. Walter Ness carried on the farm. He had brought parts of telephones with him and suggested that he might run a telephone between our farms. He ran the wires along our back lane and made the connection. Our phone was inside the pantry door. Daily Mrs. Ness and I had a phone talk. Other people thought it was a splendid idea and wanted a phone in their homes.

At Temperanceville Theo C. Cadden, who had the blacksmith shop opposite the store, and his home a quarter of a mile south, had a telephone installed so that he could contact his home. Thus the first telephone line in King Township was started by Walter Ness. The Temperanceville store was the first central. Later it was moved to King, to the store of Milton Winters and he and Mrs. Winters carried it along. Thus was the beginning of the KING TELEPHONE COMPANY.

The Ferguson farm, Maple Avenue Farm, had four houses on it. First there was the large farmhouse built by grandfather Ferguson before he and his family took up residence there. Another house was built in the garden, later moved to the Third, where it was used by hired man and family. Later it was rented to different people. At one time Mr. Hugh Mitchell lived there while he assisted on the farm. Further down was the cottage called The Pines. First it was built for a hired man, and consisted of a living room and two small bedrooms. Later this was taken over by Mr. George Burrows, husband of Catherine Ferguson, my father's sister. Mr. Burrows was a cabinet maker by trade, having learned his trade with Jacques and Hayes, a noted cabinet maker of long ago. He added to the house, with an upstairs room and bedroom, while the downstairs was his workshop. Later on, on account of father's poor health, we rented the farm to Mr. Peter Paxton, who was a tenant for 20 years, while we grew up and received our schooling. In the lower corner of the farm stood a small log cabin - a squatter's claim - where the Carter's lived, free of rent. Old Mr. Carter had been a soldier in the British army. He lived here with his wife and son, Harry. The boy mixed with the soldiers and liked to march like a soldier. Harry, or Henry as he preferred to be called, had been born mentally deficient. He loved to get a group of boys around him and pretend to train them. He would give the command "March", and the boys would break ranks. He would give the command, "Halt" and the boys would stop abruptly. He was known as Captain Carter. He would work and after his father and mother died, he lived alone in the log shack. People who knew him helped him out with food. If a girl smiled on him he was very happy. If he were sawing wood and a sunbonnet were held up on a pole he would work tremendously hard, thinking a girl was watching him. He was good-natured and happy when used right, but he was often the bull for the boy's nonsense. The boys would gather at his log hut and give him a letter from Queen Victoria and he would read it. The queen was his best girl. Of course he always wanted to be married. Once a woman did come home with him, but seeing conditions, left him. He once said to me "You know Alice, you can always have me, but I thought you would marry a minister." His one dread was that after death he would be sent to the doctor for experimentation. My brother finally took him to the poor house, where he died. A few of his neighbours clubbed

THE HISTORY OF KING CITY

King City was first named Springhill (Spring Hill) supposedly after springs which were so easily found when digging. Even shallow wells were spring fed. In Springhill and later King City, there were two hotels, "Dennis's Hotel" situated in the south-west part of the village and "Hogan's Hotel" (Armstrong's in 1967), located in the central part. There were three stores, a saddlers shop, a shoemaker, a furniture store, an undertaker's, two blacksmiths' shops, a chopping mill, a cheese factory, two doctors, two grainbuyers and a bake shop. There was also a brick yard which was operated by Alfred Jarvis, the only person who went from this village to the 1898 Klondike Gold Rush.

In 1868 in the name of Queen Victoria a quarter acre was purchased for \$250.00 from Rob't. Stewart. A military drill shed was built there and members of the York Rangers came down from Aurora to drill. This site was later used for garden parties, fairs and social events: it was also used for a skating rink. John Hogan, hotel owner and builder of the shed constructed a race track where he tried out his race horses.

A meeting was called by the trustees in Springhill to discuss the area comprising the village. A petition was circulated by J. W. Crossley, a trustee and a foremost leader of the community, to include a thousand acres as an incorporated village to be called King City. There was another Springhill in Nova Scotia, which was on the same railway line and the mail was continually being mixed up because of this. In May 1890 Springhill was officially named King City.

A large brass bell was erected on the roof of J. W. Crossley's driving shed. This bell was rung everyday,....exactly at twelve o'clock noon and six at night. It is said that the villagers could set their watches by it, it was so exact. This bell was later sold to the Augustinian Fathers at Marylake, a mile north of King City, where it is still used for a dinner bell.

The Grand Trunk Railway was the first railway built from Toronto to Aurora in 1853, later sold to the Canadian National Railway. All the villagers and surrounding neighbourhoods came to see the first train and also have a free ride on it. The engine of the first train the "Lady Elgin". It is said the first railway station was to have been built in the central part of the village, but the hotel-keeper Dennison gave a concession of land to the Grand Trunk Company, in the south-western part where it was built and still stands to-day.

Isaac McBride took over Dennis's Hotel (Langdon's Garage built on site) and was the first to establish the grain buyers at the King Station. This was a great relief to farmers to sell grain at King City rather than have to haul it to Aurora.

The first Post Master of this village was Benjamin Lloyd. Later the MacDonald Family took over the post office and hence served it for sixty years.

In the year 1857. the first religious services were held in an "Upper Room" of the Dennis Hotel, by a minister who rode to his charge on horse back. Two years later land, which was donated by a Mr. Pulford, was cleared of virgin bush and the first church, which was Anglican, was built from the clear lumber that had been cut from the bush. The good folk travelled to church by wagon and team on roads with mud to the axle. The original bell still rings and the original door with its stout six inch key still remains in the church. The church cemetery is kept in fine order and while seldom a burial takes place now, the old monuments still recall the zealous and ardent devotees of the church. Since then, the United Church was built in 1871, and the Baptist Church which was first established at Eversley in 1873 and later moved to King City and rebuilt in 1889

In 1873 the first school was established in the northern part of town. It had two rooms although there was only one teacher at the beginning. Before this a Miss Blisher had kept a private school for ladies in a room at the station hotel, where she taught sewing, fancy work, music and art. There was also a school for young children, held in a room which had formerly been a wheelwright shop. In 1951 1951, because there had been such a growth of population in the village, it was necessary to add another large room to the two-room school house. This new room was of the most modern plan of new schools.

The people of King City have always been book lovers and in 1893 a library was organized, known as the King City Mechanics and Library Association. Altogether there were 800 books, including classics, adventure and a few for children. Later the books were kept in private homes, but after a few years the organization became defunct. It was not until 1945 when King Memorial Library was established.

In 1895 a special meeting of the inhabitants of King City was held at Hogan's hotel for the purpose of relieving or rejecting coal oil lamps to be placed on the streets by our first commissioner J. W. Crossley. It was carried unanimously in favour of the motion, that Crossley take control of the lamps, get the oil and set the hour for extinguishing them. Apparently, the first year the lamps were installed, they used eighty gallons of oil, the next year only forty gallons were used, while another year only seventeen gallons used. It was in 1907 that the

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One of the chief reasons for the growth and population of this village, and the construction of many new homes has been the installation of waterworks. While there are no industries located in the village, the time may come with the decentralization of industry by the city of Toronto, when this village may become a suburb of Metropolitan Toronto.

This information was provided by the Senior Citizens of King City in 1952, for Roger Rawlings, a student of Aurora and District High School. We cannot verify the authenticity of this interesting story.

King Township Circa 1800

Largest township in York County

Area, 1878 – 86,480 acres.

Named in honour of Major John King, under-secretary of state in England.

Purchased from Mississaugas in 1787 by Toronto Purchase Act.

First survey – 1800.

First Township Meeting held at Gamble's Inn, Armitage, in 1809.

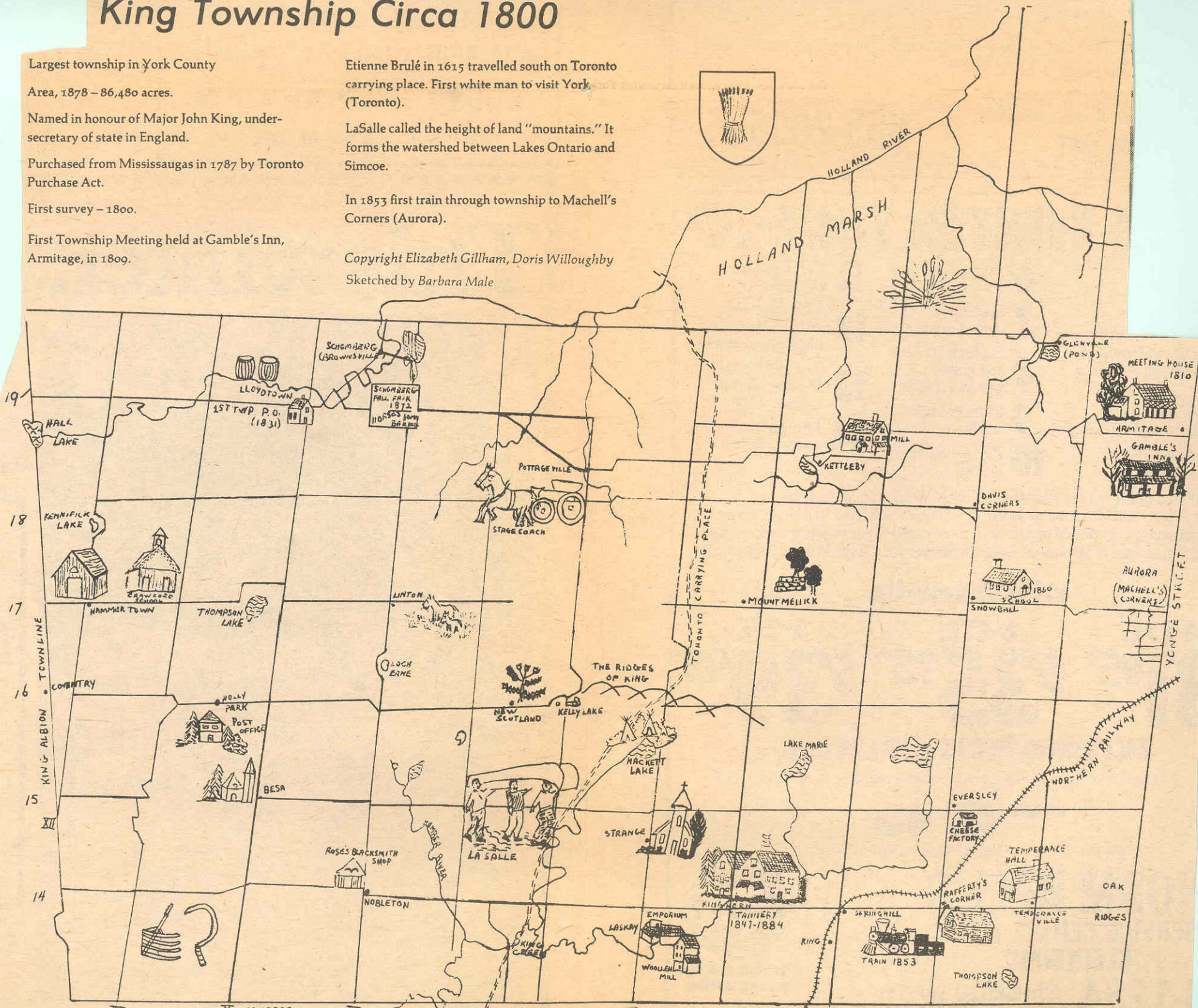
Etienne Brulé in 1615 travelled south on Toronto carrying place. First white man to visit York (Toronto).

LaSalle called the height of land "mountains." It forms the watershed between Lakes Ontario and Simcoe.

In 1853 first train through township to Machell's Corners (Aurora).

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Sketched by Barbara Male





—Globe and Mail

Despite two-month fight, King City's tree-lined main street is doomed by new road construction.

A tranquil past is doomed

By JOHN GILLIES
Globe and Mail Reporter

KING CITY — John Belknap awoke yesterday morning a bitterly disappointed man.

For more than two months he has been leading the fight to preserve the tranquillity of this police village of 1,900 persons less than five miles north of the Metropolitan Toronto boundary. Pressures exerted by the great urban complex of Metro and its immediate neighbors are pushing a swath of asphalt toward the village, a swath that will strip its main streets of their beautiful shade trees, eliminate several houses, drastically shorten the front lawns of others and probably eliminate a century-old general store where one can still buy whiffletree irons.

Mr. Belknap and his committee had pinned their hopes on a meeting Monday night with officials from the village, King Township, the Toronto and York Roads Commission and the Canadian National Railways, the four bodies involved in implementing a York County Roads program that would convert the village's two main roads, Keele Street and the King City Road, into efficient but barren four-lane thoroughfares.

Describing the meeting, he said yesterday that no one seemed to see his side at all. The officials, he said, were amazed that his group did not want the roads, one of which has already pushed its way through Maple, a few miles to the South.

And before he and his committee had a chance to plan the next move in their campaign the death knell was sounded for any hope of preventing implementation of the road program. King Township Reeve Gordon Cook

announced yesterday that the township had signed an agreement with the Roads Commission for construction of a new underpass at the village's CNR railway crossing and the widening of the roads.

In his two-month campaign, Mr. Belknap, a 21-year resident of the village, had obtained the support of more than 300 of the village's 502 homeowners. During their meetings with various township and village officials the group never put forth an alternative because, Mr. Belknap said, "we are purely laymen, not engineers; anything we put forth could be knocked down by the professionals."

As the campaign progressed it became intertwined with the long-standing need for an underpass at the CNR line that crosses both Keele Street and the King Sideroad within a few hundred yards of the village's main intersection. Those fighting to preserve the village's quiet character were said by others to be opposed to the underpass, a view not shared by Mr. Belknap and his committee.

His group, he said, has always been in favor of an underpass at the crossing and believed it could be built without greatly altering the face of the village.

Pressure for construction of an underpass has increased since the collision of a school bus and train at a level crossing in Dorion, Que., last month, in which 19 students were killed. More than 800 district school children ride buses over the crossing each day.

A report for King Township by planning consultant Eric Hardy gave momentary life to the group's attempts to save the village from the scars inflicted by road widening. In

the report, ordered before the start of the committee's campaign to save the village, Mr. Hardy urged the township council to resist plans to build the underpass and four-lane roads.

He stated that unless existing railway track is removed from the centre of the village, the community's potential for urban development will remain grossly inferior for all time. Mr. Hardy stated he could not see pouring volumes of traffic through the village.

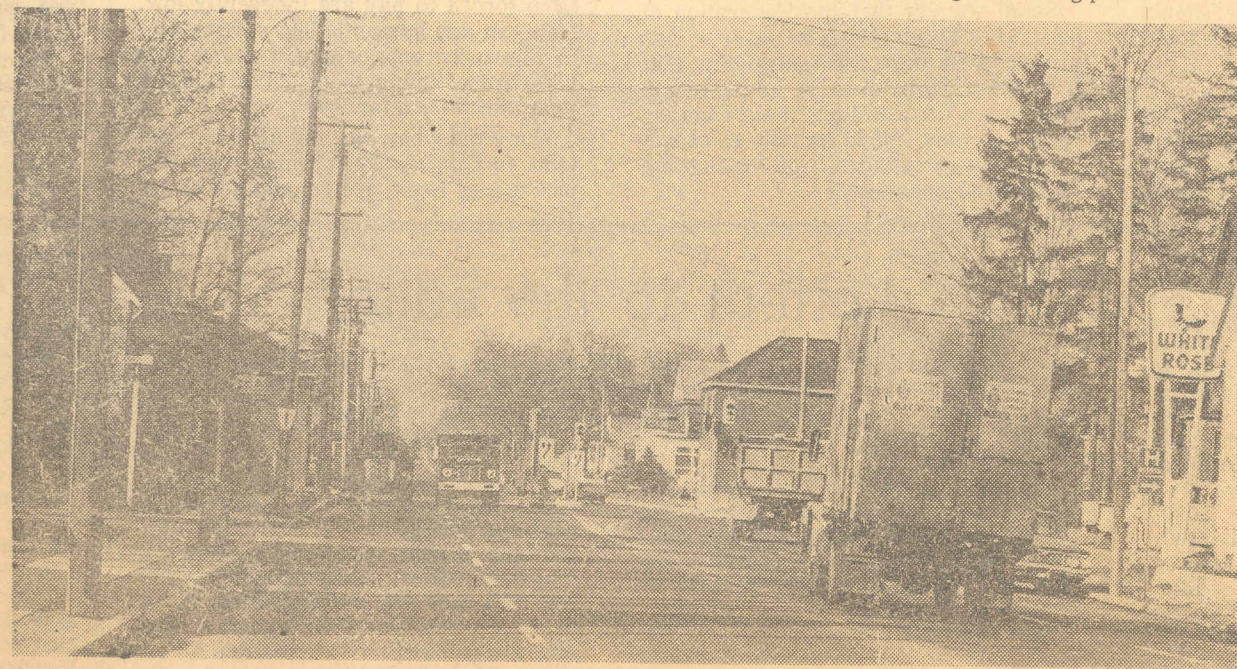
But dollars and cents outweighed the recommendations of Mr. Hardy's report, which some officials wrote off as containing a lot of fantasy. Mr. Belknap and his committee were hopeful that the Roads Commission would suggest rerouting the four-lane roads around the village.

Such a proposal would have preserved the character of the village, but burdened its taxpayers. As a police village, the 1,900 residents would be responsible for the cost of maintaining the portions of Keele Street and the King Sideroad that run through the village, plus a share of the cost of an underpass, since they would become local roads if a bypass was constructed.

The road-widening program and the construction of the grade separation are inseparably tied together, with the cost shared by York County. Cost also killed consideration of Mr. Hardy's recommendation that the railway track be removed from the centre of the village.

Mr. Cook said yesterday it would cost \$1,000,000 to reroute the railway around the village.

Announcing the signing of agreements to proceed with the road program, he said: "In view of the costs it would be extremely unwise to make any change in existing plans."



Road program has already cut a swath to the south through Maple, which used to have tree-lined main street.







Bells wish Canada a happy birthday as King City's big crowd revels



KING CITY -- On July 1, 1867, the Daily Globe of Toronto reported:

"As the City clock struck midnight, and the Dominion of Canada began its legal existence, the bells of St. James' Cathedral, under the charge of Mr. Rawlinson, sent forth a merry peal."

On July 1, 1967, in King City, as the Dominion of Canada began the second century of its legal existence, the bells of King United's carillon, under the charge of Mrs. Glen Ferguson, also sent forth a merry peal -- O Canada, the bells sang; Happy Birthday; Auld Lang Syne. Bells from All Saints also clanged their welcome to Canada's Centennial.

Fireworks lit the sky, bringing to a close the biggest celebration in the history of the tiny police village.

All 13 organizations combined talents and good, old-fashioned hard work to make the birthday party an unqualified success.

Over 2,000 people -- more than the entire population, man, woman and child, flowed into the park to consume a ton of chicken, 300 pounds of potato salad, rolls, cole slaw and ice cream. Clouds of smoke

poured from the huge pits where the chicken barbecued.

Long lines of cheerful residents and visitors snaked their way to the serving tables. Those who swore they "couldn't eat another bite", succumbed at the sight of homemade pie sold by another organization.

Children and adults laughed with glee as doughty firemen were spilled into a huge drum of water by a well-aimed baseball, in one of several games in progress. Farther up Doctor's Lane, blocked off for the festivities, hundreds enjoyed an enthusiastic, well-performed concert by the band from King City Secondary School.

Bingo and euchre were also enjoyed, as was an hilarious "ball-game" between the Rangers and the Lions.

Teen-agers and those a little older danced to the music of their choice -- and when the rains came, jammed into the barns, and continued into the traditional "wee sma' hours".

In the back of a borrowed station wagon Mrs. L.J. Redman and a visiting relative she'd enlisted counted the money taken in that

night. Final figures are not yet available, but the proceeds of the celebrations, a very big bonus to the fun, are substantial, and will be turned over to the parks board for use in the new King Park.

Beautiful quilts provided by two organizations were won by Mrs. Bill Poulis and Gordon Baker.

Mrs. Bruce Hall, in authentic Centennial costume and pretty teenager Linda Millard were crowned Queen and Princess of King City.

Through rain-soaked branches the crowd watched the fireworks sprays of brilliant color and a group of youngsters spontaneously sang Happy Birthday to their country.

Canada's second century, destined for even greater achievement than its first, had begun.