



NEWCASTLE VILLAGE AND DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

PO BOX 585 NEWCASTLE ONTARIO

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NEWCASTLE - AT THE TURN OF THE CENTURY

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Arthur R.M. Lower tells us in *CANADIANS IN THE MAKING*, that in the period centering on the turn of the century...from about 1890 to 1910..."everybody in the country, from the oldest man to the youngest infant, was growing up...a vast new Canada was rising. Provincial minds were being forced to become national."

In our next few newsletters, we will look at some of the things that touched the lives of the citizens of Newcastle, at the turn of the century, and see how the community reacted to some of the changes that were taking place.

In 1890, Newcastle was District 59 in the West Riding of Durham, and Edward Blake, a man of "extraordinary ability and great public experience" was the member for West Durham in the House of Commons in Ottawa. Sir John A Macdonald was Prime Minister having led the Conservatives to victory in the election of 1887. In that same year, Sir Wilfrid Laurier succeeded Edward Blake as leader of the Liberal party.

EDWARD BLAKE: A word should be said about this important man, "the most striking political personage connected with the history of West Durham." Blake, as a lawyer, was considered to be one of the greatest in Canada. However, as F.B. Tracy points out in his *HISTORY OF CANADA* (Collier/1908), "he was a shy, sensitive man," of delicate nature, and not particularly suited "to the hurly-burly of partizan politics." John Squair felt himself lucky to be present, in the little court-house on Baldwin Street, in Newcastle, one warm night in July of 1867 when Blake spoke. "About ten o'clock on that sweltering evening, after the audience was weary of local speakers, that impressive figure arose, and with his ringing voice and majestic sentences imposed attentive silence on all." Interesting comment about Blake can be found in Squair: *DARLINGTON AND CLARKE/pp155*.

The Canadian House of Commons was not a place for the timid or the delicate. C. Brown, in *THE ILLUSTRATED HISTORY OF CANADA* tells us that parliament was "abrupt, caustic, humorous, distinctly unrefined. Sometimes it could be tumultuous, and on certain occasions the throwing of blue books and papers across the House was authorized by tradition." One member "once complained about being hit by some such formidable object; the Opposition replied that it was only the Supplementary Estimates!"

The decades before the turn of the century were not a prosperous time for Canada. Population growth was poor. In 1850, there were about one hundred and fifty thousand Canadian-born people, living in the United States; but by 1890 there were nearly a million. "There is scarcely a farm house," said the TORONTO MAIL gloomily, in 1887, "where there is not an empty chair for the boy in the States."

In January, 1890, the citizens of Newcastle were told by the editor of the WEST DURHAM NEWS that "the agricultural outlook is anything but a bright one at present." Prices were "way down," even though crops in the previous year had been below the average in yield, and one would expect much higher prices.

The villagers understood and appreciated agricultural problems. The CANADIAN STATESMAN, Bowmanville, May 13th, 1891: "The farmer who lives near town and sells his cattle by the pound has an advantage over him who has to drive them 5 to 10 miles, for they lose so much in travelling. Here are two cases.

Mr. Millar of Orono, drove one in recently, (editor's note: for "drove" read "walked!"), and it lost 40 pounds. Mr. Sol. Fligg, of Newcastle drove a cow to Bowmanville a short time ago that got a little wild in going and when weighed was 210 lbs less than the Newcastle weight. Figure that at 5 cents a lb. and the loss is considerable."

In 1890, Newcastle was 34 yrs old, Canada was age 23. The villagers of Newcastle had been receiving Eaton's Mail Order Catalogue for six years, and it was already a national institution. The railway had been around for awhile. The first train passed through Newcastle, heading West, on October 27th 1856, and by April 1891, there were 7 trains to Toronto, on most days of the week.

Telegraph service had been in place for 40 years, and a stage coach ran from Orono to Newcastle to meet the trains. In large centres in Canada, sewers, running-water and telephones had arrived in the 1880's. But in 1890, in Newcastle, there was no electricity, no industry, and no automobiles.

OUT OF THE MISTS tells us that almost 20 years later, in February of 1908, Councillors F.W. Fligg, A.A. Powers, G.H. Luxon and J.G. Honey, of Clarke Twp, under Reeve John Hughes, passed a resolution, part of which stated, that the unrestricted running of automobiles on local public roads was, "legislation for the few, to the detriment of the masses, for none of the farming community use them, none are owned in our Municipality, and only a couple in the County, and that they are used only for pleasure and not for business."

Newcastle travellers were still very pleased with their horses. In May 1891, the Newcastle correspondent for the CANADIAN STATESMAN told readers that, "The most magnificent set of double harness ever manufactured in this vicinity, has just been completed by Mr. John R. Barfett for Mr. C. Wilmot, of the Fisheries."

When the railway arrived, it was hoped that it would bring boom times, but instead it took business away from the port, and carried the young people off to Toronto. Even the Massey family got on the train, and moved to Toronto, as did Northrop and Lyman, the large patent medicine company.

S.B Chandler was interested in making the same trip. He was the Newcastle dentist, and placed several ads in the Statesman, saying:

"OFF TO TORONTO. S.B. Chandler, Newcastle offer, by Private Sale, or Will Exchange for Farm Property, all of his property in Newcastle, consisting of Stores, Houses and Lots, and valuable orchard, the Homestead being one of the most complete in the country. Terms easy."

In April 1891 a general census was taken and the population of Newcastle was 787.

All was not doom and gloom in Newcastle in 1891. We can imagine, William Otten, clerk at George Jacobs' hotel at the corner of King Street and Mill, reading the Canadian Statesman, on a sunny morning, early in May. The census tells us William had been born in Ontario, his father in England, his mother on the Island of Jersey. William was age 25, and his eye might well be caught by an item on the editorial page which read:

"IMMENSE CROWD EXPECTED The prospects are that an immense crowd of people will gather in Bowmanville at the Queen's Birthday Demonstration on Monday, May 25th. The spring seeding will be over, the boys will want a day's outing, and they can get it with oceans of fun in this town that day. The 34th Batt. Band and the Oshawa Lodge Sons of England are coming, and the firemen, lacrosse and baseball teams are expected. There is promised a big turn out from surrounding villages too."

We hope the "girls" enjoyed the outing too! We are told in a later issue of the STATESMAN, that the Newcastle Lodge S.O.E. and all their sisters, cousins and aunts were also in attendance.

Queen Victoria was not alive to observe her "Birthday Demonstration." The "Great Queen" had died earlier that year, on January 22nd, just short of her 72nd birthday. Victoria had been Queen since 1837. Newcastle had not known another monarch, but that is a story for another time.

MY GRANDFATHER - by Eunice Streeter

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I never knew my grandfather. Neither grandfathers! But in rooting around my family tree the past couple of years the image of my grandfather Stutt has become more clear. His name was Andrew...Andrew Stutt. His own grandfather settled with his wife and their young son in Clarke Township in 1833.

When the time came, Andrew took a farm and a wife in Teeswater, and after the little girls started to come along, he followed the urge to "Go West, young man!," and he homesteaded on the prairies for awhile. That life didn't agree with him though...neither Saskatchewan...nor farming. We used to hear about his comical performances at Shea's Hippodrome, in Toronto, and on the stage in Wiarton. I have never found, or seen a photograph of my grandfather, only a picture on a poster. "Andrew Stutt," it said, "Comedian." He liked to make people laugh.

1891 CENSUS *** VILLAGE of NEWCASTLE

No	Hs	Hs	Hs	R	Family	Name	M/F	Age	M/W	Rel	thr	ath	chr	rh	Occupation	Wage	empr	R	W	dd	code	
157	B	13	18		A17	See, Robert	M	43	M		Eng	Eng	Eng	C/E	Ret Dry Goods & Gro							
158						See, Hettie	F	32	M	W	Ont	Eng	Eng	C/E								
159						See, Minnie	F	11		dau	Ont	Eng	Ont	C/E								
160	B	12	25		A18	Glendenning, Chistop	M	30	M		Ont	Scot	Ont	Pres	Hotel Keeper		12					
161						Glendenning, Louisa	F	28	M	W	Ont	Ont	Eng	C/E								
162						Glendenning, Mary An	F	54	W,?		Ont	Scot	Scot	C/E								
163						Coatts, Richard.D	M	22		L	Ont	Scot	Scot	Pres	Teacher, P.School	11						
164						Brown, Eiveline ?	F	16		Dom	Ont	Ont	Ont	Meth	Servant							
165	W	11.5	18		A19	Steen, John	M	41	M		Ont	Ire	Ire	C/E	Carpenter		11					
166						Steen, Isabella	F	38	M	W	Ire	Ire	Ire	C/E								
167						Steen, Robert	M	19		son	Ont	Ont	Ire	C/E	Teacher, Studing fo							
168						Steen, John	M	17		son	Ont	Ont	Ire	C/E	Moulders Apprentice							
169						Steen, Edmond	M	12		son	Ont	Ont	Ire	C/E								
170						Steen, Gertrude	F	10		dau	Ont	Ont	Ire	C/E								
171						Steen, Dora	F	8		dau	Ont	Ont	Ire	C/E								
172						Steen, Charles A.	M	5		son	Ont	Ont	Ire	C/E					x	x		
173	B	13	10		A20	Allin, Daniel	M	57	M		Eng	Eng	Eng	Meth	Retail, Stationery						1?	
174						Allin, Francis	M	60		W	Eng	Eng	Eng	Meth								
175						Allin, Alice M.M.	F	28		dau	Ont	Eng	Eng	C/E								
176						Allin, William	M	88	W	L	Eng	Eng	Eng	Meth	Retired							
177	W	12	10		A21	McClung, Thomas	M	64	M		Ire	Ire	Ire	Meth	Retail Dealer, Dry							
178						McClung, Mary J.	F	48	M	W	Eng	Eng	Eng	Meth								
179						McClung, Stanley	M	13		son	Ont	Ire	Eng	Meth								
180						McClung, Bella	F	7		dau	Ont	Ire	Eng	Meth								
181						Bell, William	M	88	M	L	Eng	Eng	Eng	Meth								
182						Bell, Ann S.	F	75	M	L	Eng	Eng	Eng	Meth								
183	W	11.5	22		A22	Scott, James	M	43			Ont	Scot	Scot	Pres	Farmer		12					
184						Vanpiles?, Annie	F	46	W	Dom	Eng	Eng	Eng	Pres	Servant	11						
185						Vanpiles?, John	M	19		Dom	Eng	Eng	Eng	Pres	Farm Labourer	11						
186	W	11.5	10		A23	Allin, Charles	M	69	M		Eng	Eng	Eng	Meth	Cabinet Maker							
187						Allin, Eleanor	F	56	M	W	Ont	Eng	Eng	Meth								
188	W	11	15		A24	Foster, Wellington	M															
189	B	13	16			Foster, Wellington	M	44			Ont	US	Ont	C/E	Farmer		13					
190						Foster, Sarah	F	76	W	M	Ont	US	Ont	C/E								
191						Foster, Julia	F	50			Ont	Ont	Ont	C/E								
192	B	13	14			Vars, Filoua?	F	52	M		Ont	US	Ont	C/E								
193	W	11.5	9		A25	Maugn?, Patrick	M	57	M		Sea	Ire	Ire	R.C.	Gent							
194						Maugn?, Hellen	F	45	M	W	Ire	Ire	Ire	R.C.								
195						Maugn?, Ann	F	27		dau	Ont	Ire	Ire	R.C.								
196						Maugn?, James	M	22		son	Ont	Ire	Ire	R.C.	Farm Labourer	11						
197						Maugn?, Patrick	M	18		son	Ont	Ire	Ire	R.C.	Blacksmith	11						
198						Maugn?, John	M	16		son	Ont	Ire	Ire	R.C.	Farm Labourer	11						
199						Maugn?, Frank	M	13		son	Ont	Ire	Ire	R.C.	Farm Labourer							
1100						Maugn?, Antonie	M	11		son	Ont	Ire	Ire	R.C.								
1101						Maugn?, Maggie	F	15		dau	Ont	Ire	Ire	R.C.								
1102						Maugn?, Hellen	F	12		dau	Ont	Ire	Ire	R.C.								
1103						Maugn?, Julia	F	10		dau	Ont	Ire	Ire	R.C.								
1104						Maugn?, Agnes	F	13		dau	Ont	Ire	Ire	R.C.					x	x		
1105						Maugn?, Adelia	F	12		dau	Ont	Ire	Ire	R.C.					x	x		
1106	W	11.5	18		A26	Thom, James	M	59	M		Ont	Scot	Scot	Meth	Minister, Methodist	11						
1107						Thom, Mahalie?	F	50	M	W	Ont	Ont	Ont	Meth								
1108						Thom, Margaret	F	27		dau	Ont	Ont	Ont	Meth								
1109						Thom, Ethel W.C.	F	13		dau	Ont	Ont	Ont	Meth								
1110						Thom, Douglas J.	M	11		son	Ont	Ont	Ont	Meth								