

# NEWCASTLE VILLAGE AND DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER - Jan, Feb, Mar & Apr 1996

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## 200 YEARS...

We are pleased to celebrate the 200th Anniversary of Clarke Township, and the Anniversary of the arrival of the Lovekin family in Clarke in 1796.

Richard Lovekin left Ireland in 1795, and sailed for new York on board a ship called the Atlas. In County Cork he had leased land at Kilcolman Castle, and so the Lovekin property in Clarke Twsp acquired the same name --- Kilcolman Farm. In the Lovekin Pioneer Cemetery, next to Wilmot Creek, on Lot 35, Concession 1, Clarke Twsp, --- within sight of Kilcolman Farm --- we find the following:

In this plot lie Richard Lovekin  
and his Wife  
first in Canada 1795  
and  
Immediate members of their  
Family together with many  
of their  
Pioneer Neighbours  
Restored 1935  
by his descendants



Richard's wife was Sarah Patrickson; in the party traveling to America were 3 daughters and 2 sons, Richard Lovekin Jr, John, Mary, Eliza, Sally and Hester Alcock a servant.

Richard's son, Richard Lovekin Jr, in his diary tells us that:  
*"Our house was the first permanent dwelling erected in the township, there had been a small hut built before at the creek next below us for the purpose of trading with the Indians. My father died in Clarke the morning of the first day of Jan., 1798."* – OUT OF THE MISTS

(EDITOR: We note in passing, that the above suggests that one of the first structures built in Clarke Twsp was a hut for trading with the Indians at the mouth of Graham creek...that is at Bond Head. Beldon's Illustrated Atlas of 1878 says that *"The Averys at one time owned all Bond-Head, where Col.Cozens is said to have cleared the first two acres of land in the township of Clarke."*)

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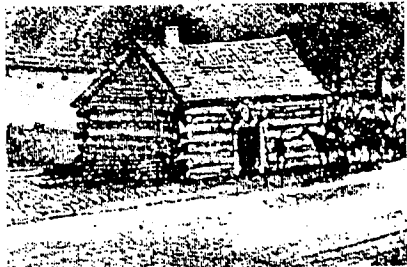
\*\* After acquiring his land in Clarke, Richard returned to New York State to get his family. His savings amounted to only 150 pounds -- he did not want to carry it with him back to the States -- where to hide it?

Helen Lovekin Anderson, mother of our current Society member Judge Richard Lovekin, tells us that, *"He put it in a notch near the top of a great tree, wrapped in a stocking. In the spring of 1797 when he returned he at once went to the tree. HIS MONEY WAS GONE! What to do? His mind hovered around that tree for many days, and finally he cut it down. Surprise, surprise! He was elated. He found his money at the base of the tree in a woodmouse nest which had been nicely lined with the stocking. That woodmouse was a thief and a banker!"*

\*\* The Lovekins were closely connected with the Bates, another family that arrived in the first days of Clarke Twsp. Richard Lovekin Jr married Theodocia Bates and her grave can be found in the Lovekin Pioneer Cemetery.

\*\* J.T.Coleman gives us an idea of what life was like in those first days in a small book called EARLY SETTLEMENT OF BOWMANVILLE & VICINITY, written in 1875. He tells us that: *"Landing in a new and wild country, and winter fast approaching, the people - set at once to work, to construct shanties, which were plastered on the inside with mud, and had bark covering for a roof"*

Years later -- in 1816 - when Sam Wilmot moved to Clarke Twsp, the only neighbours were Richard Lovekin, J.P.Avery, the Bates, the Blairs and the Hartwells -- there were no settlers north of the main road -



just "dense, unbroken forest, inhabited only by Indians and wild animals. The road, the Danforth road, was impassable through Clarke and Darlington in the spring and the fall - and could only be used by sleighs in the winter.

Mail service was started soon after the war of 1812. The mail was brought from Kingston to York, once a week, on mule-back, or when the traveling was good, during winter on a sleigh.

## NO SUN AT NOON..

The Danforth Road, sometimes called Dundas Street, or the Kingston Road, running from Toronto to Kingston, had been cleared by the end of December in 1800, but it wasn't maintained, and during much of the year was impassable. Charles Durand who traveled from Hamilton to Belleville in 1815 described our region in "REMINISCENCES" as "wild and uninhabitable."



June 1819 - Clarke Twsp is approx. 9 miles wide, from one mile east of Port Granby to the Crago Corner on hwy no.2, the "Nine Mile Woods" where you "couldn't see the sun even at noon!" John Goldie, a botanist who traveled on foot from the Bay of Quinte to Whitby in the summer of 1819 wrote: "I arose with the sun (June 24<sup>th</sup>) and after 2 miles I got into what is called the nine-mile woods. A short time ago there was not a house all this distance, but lately there have been three or four log ones built. After leaving the woods there are a few miles cleared along the road, after which you come to the five-mile woods, which are still unsettled

## NEWCASTLE'S FIRST HOUSE..

John Squair tells us in DARLINGTON AND CLARKE that Criness LaRue was Clerk for the Township of Clarke in 1832, and "for *sometime thereafter.*" It is possible that Criness, a carpenter, built and owned the first house in the village of Newcastle.

The LeRue family were "a rare type of stock in our region." It was said that they were of French Huguenot origin, had moved to Holland and then on to America where they arrived as early as 1670. Criness had a sister Rebecca (1792-1856) who married Nathaniel Powers (1787-1862) and they came to Clarke in 1832. They had 12 children including.

Nathaniel Powers had 2 brothers living in Newcastle, Thomas a tailor, and Samuel a shoemaker. Both can be found in the 1848 census, Samuel on the north side of King Street and Thomas on the south. A Calvin Powers was also a shoemaker in Newcastle in 1848; SQUAIR tells us that a Calvin Powers, a marble cutter, moved to Wisconsin. We note that a "C. Powers" cut the Lovekin gravestones in the Lovekin Cemetery.

Stephen Crandel bought his village property at North and King Streets from Patrick Every (or Avery) on April 16<sup>th</sup> 1832, and sold to Wm McIntosh 2 years later on April 8<sup>th</sup> 1834. It would be interesting to know who helped him build his tavern!

There is no record of when Criness LaRue (who may have arrived in Newcastle before he became a member of the Clarke Council in 1832), -- there is no record of when he bought his land, but on Nov 3<sup>rd</sup> 1838, George Strange Boulton gave him a Quit Claim (a piece of paper saying that Criness really owned his village lot) for 5 acres at the Community Hall corner, that would include the Community Hall land. The Claim said that the lot went "so far as to include the dwelling house now erected thereon." Two years later LaRue sold 4 acres of this village lot to John Gibson for 50 pounds "including the place where a house was burned." If Criness LaRue didn't own the first house in Newcastle, he probably owned the first house that burned in Newcastle!

OUT OF THE MIST tells us that Criness moved to the Kirby area and was living there when he moved to the State of Michigan in 1853.

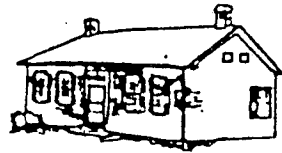
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## OUR 2<sup>ND</sup> ANNUAL PRESIDENT'S POT LUCK LUNCH:

On Saturday, June 29<sup>th</sup>, members of our Society will drive to Haldimand County, and visit the village of Grafton which is noted for its historic buildings:



- The HALDIMAND TWSP BUILDING, built in 1858.
- GRAFTON INN, built to replace a log building.
- DR IVES' home; he may have been the first doctor between Kingston and Toronto.
- CALDER'S MEAT STORE, one of the oldest buildings in the community, built c.1837.
- and many others.



We will eat our pot luck lunch --- and take part in a CANADA DAY celebration. We will visit several of the historic buildings, watch a parade, explore part of the old Danforth Road, and visit Academy Hill, where Daniel and Hart Massey lived and farmed before moving to Bond Head. For more information, or for transportation to Grafton, please check with members of our Executive, or Florence or Herb Taylor at 987-5433.



### NOTICE.

**A**LL persons who have applied for or are desirous of purchasing Town Lots in the plot lately laid out in the Township of Clark, on lot number twenty seven, and lot number twenty eight, are requested to meet at Clark's Inn, on Wednesday, the 20th inst. at 10 o'clock, when the Proprietors will attend and be prepared to conclude sales to intending purchasers. One of the Proprietors will in future attend at the same place on the first and third Monday of each month, to transact business connected with the interest of the contemplated TOWN OF BOND HEAD and the Harbour building there.

In the spring, one of the proprietors will reside on the property, and it is intended to commence a Grist Mill and other improvements.

Cobourg, 4th Nov., 1839.

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### LOTS FOR SALE:

This notice appeared in the COBOURG STAR of Nov 6<sup>th</sup> 1839. Clark's Tavern, where the meeting was to take place was on the road to Kingston, on Twsp Lot no.22, about 1¼ miles east of the village and on the north side of the road. The tavern belonged to Edward Clarke, who a few years later was Customs officer at Bond Head Harbour. At the time of this notice Edward Clarke was president of the Bond Head Harbour Company. OUT OF THE MIST tells us that Samuel Copeland, in 1828, walked

past Lot 22 and where Clarke's Tavern would be a decade later, and there was "no tavern, no hemlocks cut down and you could scarcely see the sun at noon."

Copeland says there were only 2 houses, that of Ezra Gifford and Thadeus Brown. Copeland was walking to a blacksmith shop that was about a 1/2 mile from Newcastle, kept by a man named Hilicar. He sold buns, ginger beer and a few candies. As Copeland noted, "That was all of Newcastle then."

## 200 YEARS:

On Sat. July 13<sup>th</sup>, Local citizens, friends and visitors will meet at the Parkette at the foot of Mill Street to celebrate 200 years of Clarke Twsp history. There will be one or two speeches, refreshments, the unveiling of a plaque, and a chance to say HAPPY BIRTHDAY to dozens of people. The gathering will then move to Kilcolman farm, the home of Lynn and Richard Lovekin, for further fellowship, from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. -- All are invited.

## JAMES AND RICHARD LOVEKIN:

It is with much sadness that we remind our readers of the death of Prof. James Patrickson Lovekin, who died on Good Friday, April 5<sup>th</sup>, in his 75<sup>th</sup> year. "So interested in history," -- Prof. Lovekin attended elementary school in Newcastle. He won the Wilmot medal in high school --- earned his masters from the University of Toronto --- then studied at Queen's, Harvard, Cornell and Columbia Universities. He was 10 years at Lakehead University before retiring with his family to an historic home in Colborne, Ontario.

His younger brother, now retired, the Hon. Eric Richard Lovekin, a strong supporter of our Society, did an honours course at Trinity College, U. of T., and was federally appointed a Justice of the Ontario Court of Justice. Their father was Clarence Reginald Lovekin (1895-1965); their mother, born Helen Coulson, now Helen Lovekin Anderson, is a well known, long time, honoured member of our Society.

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NEWCASTLE VILLAGE & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Box 15, Unit no.3, 20 King Street West  
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Annual Membership: SINGLE \$8.00; FAMILY \$12.00

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