

VILLAGE & DISTRICT

HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER ** JANUARY TO MARCH 2000

EARLY DAYS

NEWCASTLE VILLAGE -- INCORPORATED 1850

The first council consisted of Andrew McNaughton, John J. Robson, John Treleaven, William McIntosh and Jacob Casselman. Andrew McNaughton was appointed Reeve; Benjamin M. Allen was appointed Clerk.

The map on page 3 is part of the Tremaine Map of 1861 and shows a plan for Newcastle - just five years after incorporation. The map is turned on its side (from the normal way for maps - to make it easier to read the names) so north is to the right - south is to the left.

Over the years there have been several village plans. The one below differs from the Hanning Plan - produced in 1868 - and dated the 11th of January 1868. The Hanning Plan was drawn up by Clement G. Hanning, P.L. Surveyor of Bowmanville and was signed by the man who might be called the "Founding Father of Newcastle" - or at least one of the "Founding Fathers." He was George Strange Boulton - he signed the plan, and it is considered and often mentioned - now in the year 2000 - when village property is bought or sold.

The street on the map - part marked as a dark line - running north - is North Street. The dark east west street is King Street. The dotted line is the railroad track - at first the Grand Trunk line - now in 2000 the CNR line. The creek entering the village on the east - into the William Walbridge property is Graham Creek and it flows into the good sized mill pond which supplied a head of water for the McIntosh mill - at Bond Head Harbour. This is the mill that gave "Mill Street" its name.

It is interesting that the village property line cuts through the middle of the 2nd concession - so that land on the west side of North Street - Horace Foster's land for example - was in the village, while the land of Justice of the Peace, Henry Munro, was outside the village.

In an 1864 directory Horace Foster is called a "farmer" but he was also a hotel owner, owning Wellington House, later called Foster's Hotel - the big red brick building still standing on King St and called "international house" by villagers today. Horace Foster owned 50 acres on the West side of North Street, 45 under crops and a 5 acre pasture. The 1861 agricultural census tells us that he had 18 acres of wheat and 4 acres of oats. He and William McIntosh were the big -and only - cider producers in the village - Horace producing 132 gallons, William McIntosh producing 150 gallons. Horace probably sold his cider in the hotel - William would sell his in his store where Dr Rod McArthur's dentistry is today.

The north-east corner of the village, by the lake, was still the estate of The Honorable Mr. Baldwin - farmed by Robert Livingston, Irish - with a farm hand named Wm Coleman age 53 in 1861. His neighbour, Daniel Arnot, age 81, died just before this map was made.

Note the Hon.G. Boulton land. The main street to the left - to the south of Boulton's land - was Metcalf Street and we see that there were streets planned for the small section of land between Metcalf and the railroad tracks. This area changed considerably when highway 401 went through.

Note also the streets planned for the area west of North Street. They were never "opened."

Corners of the village were also farm land - Thomas Barrie lived beside Lake Ontario on Broken Front lot number twenty-five - and Francis Coulter was the owner of lot twenty-five at the north-east corner of the village.

The 1861 census listed farmers who owned land in the village. There were almost 30 and they grew most of the crops that was grown in Upper Canada at that time. Andrew McNaughton, the Reeve - and a Newcastle village merchant - was one of 5 village farmers who grew barley. A Scot would know about barley. There were four important species of barley grass grown in the British Isles - and one was the Scottish "bere." When "ground up" it was great food for pigs - but in Scotland a peculiar dish was made called "sowens." - The barley was turned into a mash - steeped in water and allowed to ferment for several days until it became an acid concoction - said to be extremely soothing for fevers

In 1844 wheat and lumber were big items shipped out of Bond Head Harbour. There were 2065 barrels of flour loaded onto ships in the harbour that year - and at the same time 24 thousand bushels of wheat and 70 thousand feet of lumber. We do not know the standard size of barrels used at Newcastle in 1844 - but in the 1950's, a barrel of beer was said to be 36 gallons. Traditionally a bushel has been equal to a cylinder 18.5 inches in diameter and 8 inches deep - a total of 2150.42 cubic inches. A gallon of water - or beer - is 231 cubic inches. So the question arises, was there more flour than wheat - or more wheat than flour - passing through Newcastle Village and onto Bond Head ships in 1844?

And then there was oats, potash, pearlash, and potatoes the oats shipped in bulk - the potash and pearlash in barrels - the potatoes probably in bags, and measured in bushels. Pearlash was a refined potash and there were 41 barrels shipped in 1844.

Then there were barrels of whiskey. Twice as many as the barrels of pearlash. And butter - 10 kegs as well as 6 kegs of lard. A keg was a small barrel - sometime called a wine barrel - and usually contained less than 10 gallons when filled with a liquid. "Keg" was also a measure for "100 lbs of nails" and a small barrel - "a keg" - full of nails, would weigh 100 pounds. There were also 4 oxen shipped from the port of Bond Head that year - and all this information can be found in Smith's Canadian Gazetteer, which contained statistical and general information respecting all parts of the upper province which was more properly called Canada West.

Bowmanville is also listed in the same directory. It certainly appears bigger than Bond Head - one grist mill, one oatmeal mill, one tannery, one distillery, one carding machine and cloth factory, one axe factory, one ashery, seven stores, four taverns, one brewery, one druggist, one pottery, two wagon makers, three blacksmiths, one chair factory, two bakers, two watchmakers, six shoemakers and six tailors - but no mention of a harbour.

The book lists "Lake Ontario," and tells us that it is 181 miles long by 60 miles in breadth - has several excellent harbours, and the principal ones are listed - Toronto - Presqu'Isle - Kingston - Port Hope. The latter shipped 120 bushels of potatoes - Bond Head shipped 290 - so our village was a "big shipper" of some products.

However Port Hope shipped a number of cargoes not mentioned for Bond Head - such as shingles (78 thousand) - Timothy seed (152 barrels) and rags (10 tons). Port Hope shipped 25 kegs of butter - Bond Head shipped 10 - and Port Hope also shipped 22 firkins of butter - a small tub equal to one quarter of a barrel.

It would be interesting to know when ships first arrived at Bond Head. We know the harbour Company was formed in March of 1838 - but ships probably landed people and cargo here before the harbour was built.



Smith's Gazetteer is dated 1846 and it says that the village of Bond Head contained 50 or 60 houses at that time - about one third occupied - no store - one tavern open - two to three shut up. It also says that there was an Episcopal Church and a grist mill in the village at that time.

The land where the marina is today was granted to King's College - the future University of Toronto - on the 3rd of January, 1828. The Bond Head parkette - where the grain elevator used to be - had been granted 32 years earlier to Rachel Crookshank of Toronto. Rachel sold out to the Every family - who were at first farmers but later bought more acreage having learned that buying land could be a profitable business.

Richard Every - in the early 1830's - owned several pieces of land just east of Bond Head on Lake Ontario. He borrowed money from The Bank of Upper Canada - over extended himself - and in 1837 sheriff Henry Ruttan - from Cobourg - took over the part that was eventually Bond Head Village. (When you got into trouble - in 1832 - in Clarke Township - the sheriff came to your aid from Cobourg, in Hamilton Township.)

Cobourg was "The District Town of Newcastle District" and Smith's says it was (and probably still is) "pleasantly situated on a gentle rising ground." If anyone had asked sheriff Henry Ruttan he could probably have told them that in 1846 the corporate limits of Cobourg extended nearly two miles from the centre of town - there was a harbour which had cost £ 10,381. 6s 3d - it had a light-house - there were excellent plank side-walks extending in every direction - some said for a distance of one or two miles - and the earth consisted of gravelly soil which, in consequence, was dry, clean and healthy.

We get an inkling of "Newcastle Village and District" transportation in the early 1800's when we read that "in season - steamboats call daily at Cobourg" on their passage to and from Kingston, also Toronto and Rochester, in New York State - and a stage left Cobourg daily for Rice Lake, where it was met by a steamboat - the *Forester* - which conveyed passengers to and from the district town of Peterborough.

It was said at the time that "Newcastle District would be materially advanced" and it would be "highly advantageous to the public" if a harbour were erected in Clarke Township on Lake Ontario. Towards this end, N. H. Baird, a civil engineer had survey both lots 27, and 28, at the "front" of each, which was a "most desirable situation for the erection for a Harbour." The quoted words are from "*Chap XXI. 1st Victoria, AD 1837 -8 - Third Session*" - of the Upper Canada Gazette. It is interesting to remember that our harbour in Newcastle started to serve the public at the same time as Queen Victoria began to rule the Empire.

It would be interesting to know the story of the "50 or 60 houses at that time" that were in Newcastle - in Bond Head - in 1846.

WE TURN TO THE COBOURG STAR OF NOVEMBER 6TH 1839 TO SEE IF WE CAN FIND ANSWERS TO SOME OF OUR QUESTIONS -

(see page 6)

A Message From the President

For those of you who do not know who I am, my name is Ron Locke and I have been a member of the Newcastle Village & District Historical Society for almost twenty years. I was first President in 1988 so this is my second go at the job.

Betty & I moved to Newcastle in 1968 when we bought the front ten acres of Lot 35, Con. 2, Clarke Twp. Originally the Allan Wilmot Farm, later the Norman Rickard Farm, it became known as the Ken Werry Farm when Ken married Winifred Rickard and took it over from his in-laws.

In 1818, Major Wilmot, Allan's father, purchased land from the Lovekins. 160 acres passed to Allan on his marriage to the "Fair Maid of Quinte", Julia Ann Turner. Our house, immediately west of St. George's Cemetery, is, I believe, one of the oldest in the area, having been built by Allan on that land in or about 1832.

I was voted in as President of the Society at the AGM in February 2000, and plan to keep up the quality leadership of our Past-President, Herb Taylor. Herb is still very active as Vice-President, and Newsletter Editor. He likes research and is very good at it but, like all of us, he sometimes suffers from writer's block! Suggestions and submissions from other members are therefore always welcome.

Two exciting things have happened recently. Don Brown, a recent society member whose family history in this area goes back a long way, enjoys Web publishing. He has established a Newcastle Village & District Historical Society Web Page. For those of you who have Internet access, the address is: www.geocities.com/nvdhs. Don explains that the page is still under construction and that he welcomes positive feedback.

Events Co-ordinator Sanford Haskill, another Society member, has offered to produce a Massey Machinery Show in Newcastle. Anticipated date: 2001. A committee has been struck and has had its first meeting. The event will be a large one. You will hear more on this exciting event as time goes by and plans begin to fall into place. On April 3, local historian, retired police officer and Society member, Myno Van Dyke, will be speaking on the history of policing in Newcastle. I urge you all to come out to hear Myno and look forward to seeing you in the Lions Room, Newcastle Community Hall, at 7.30 pm.

Remember, our Historical Room in the Community Hall is open every Tuesday morning. Ken Stephenson or Royal Lee will be happy to show you around and answer questions so stop in for a chat!

Please send me your email address if you have one. I will then be able to send a blanket message out when events come up at short notice, or for reminders. My address is: rlocke@speedline.ca

Recently, on the back of an envelope from one of our members I noticed this quote and I would like to share it with you as it echoes my sentiments as well.

“Live for the Present, Dream of the Future, Learn from the Past”

Ron...

FROM THE COBOURG STAR

All 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 intended 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 those interest in 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.

The above may answer one or two questions - as well as give us some interesting information - but it also presents us with another couple of questions.

Who were the proprietors? Who were the men - or women - who thought about and planned for a new village, to be called Bond Head, at the mouth of a creek on Lake Ontario? Why were they at Clark's Tavern? Why did they use the name Bond Head, and why did they include Lot 28 with Lot 27 when they would know that lot 28 was not theirs - but was still owned by King's College?

To better understand what was going on we turn to the first officers in the new community. It is likely that the officers of the new Bond Head Harbour Company were the "Proprietors" interested in selling lots in the new village - the "contemplated Town of Bond Head."

We do not know anything about the first meeting of the Bond Head Harbour Company - but we have details of what was probably the 2nd Executive meeting. That meeting took place at Clark's Tavern - on the present Highway no.2 - near where Golf Course Road is today - just east of Newcastle Village.

Another notice in the COBOURG STAR - Wednesday, July 24th 1839 tells us about the meeting. It is found as Reel 3 - N117 - at the Ontario Archives, in Toronto, and tells us that Edward Clark was unanimously elect President of the new village. William McIntosh, along with Ezra C. Smith, and John Brown were elected as directors - and George Strange Boulton, also a director - was the person one sent money to - if one was a shareholder of the company - and was obliged to pay a 5% installment by October 1st 1839. - So who were these men? (to be continued)

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Annual Membership: SINGLE \$8.00 - FAMILY \$12.00