



Vo and Chris Love with visiting navy friends at Harris Lodge.

## How it all happened: Harris Lodge and the Loves

By Mary Love, with introduction by Myno Van Dyke

### Introduction

Christopher Charles Love was born in England in 1911 and earned a Master of Arts degree from the University of Cambridge in 1933. That same year, he emigrated to Canada to teach Classics and serve as a housemaster at Bishop's College School in Lennoxville, Quebec.

During World War II, Dr. Love served as a navigator in the Royal Canadian Navy. Following the war, he pursued further studies at the University of Toronto, completing a PhD in English in 1950. His academic career at Victoria University began in 1949 and spanned nearly three decades until his retirement in 1977, when he was named Professor Emeritus of English.

In 1957, Dr. Love and his wife, Vo, purchased a property on Darcy Street in Bond Head from their dentist, Horace Walton Ball. The street is thought to be named after D'Arcy Boulton—a lawyer, judge, and politician from Cobourg—who was associated with William Lyon Mackenzie's "Family Compact" in 1833.

The property, an old frame cottage formerly known as Harris Lodge, was originally built as a schoolhouse in the 1840s. It was later converted into a private residence by Myndert Harris, Jr. Shortly after World War I, Dr. W.H. Walton-Ball acquired the lodge and made several improvements, including an enclosed porch and a screened-in verandah for summer dining.

Though Toronto was their primary residence, the Loves and their children Jonathon and Mary spent summers at Harris Lodge for over 40 years, welcoming friends and Dr. Love's students alike.



Chris, Vo, Jonathon and Mary Love departing for church in Newcastle.

permanent home slightly to the east, at the very end of Darcy Street. Reverend Noel Gordon, now retired, previously served as Minister at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Bowmanville and is currently Vice President of the Newcastle Village & District Historical Society. His wife, Rev. Dr. J. Dorcas Gordon, served as Principal of Knox College from 1999 to 2017. They raised their family in the home on Darcy Street, where they continue to reside.

In 1997, the property was sold to Noel and Dorcas Gordon. Christopher Love passed away the following year, in 1998. By then, the original lodge had deteriorated significantly and was eventually demolished.

The Gordons first erected a prefabricated cottage on the site and later built a

## The Loves at Harris Lodge

In the summer of 1956, the Loves house-sat for Professor C. B. Sissons and Mrs. Sissons at their farm near Orono. A fellow classicist, C.B. was one of Chris Love's most important mentors, even though by the time he and Vo came to Toronto from the Eastern Townships, Chris had decided to pursue a career teaching English.

The Loves had been looking around the Orangeville area for a cottage for a year or so. Early in the fall of 1956, Chris Love was in Dr. Horace Walton-Ball's dental chair at the corner of Yonge and College Streets in Toronto. On hearing about the Orono sojourn, Dr. Walton-Ball mentioned that his family had a cottage for sale nearby. Despite wads of cotton in his mouth, Chris. Love expressed enthusiastic interest. Vo Love's extensive photo album collection (from 1930-mid 1990), reveals that the Love family's first look at Harris Lodge was in the winter of 1956, so clearly no time was lost in taking a look at the Walton-Ball property.

When we first stayed at Harris Lodge early in the spring of 1957, the tin bathtub in what became my brother Jonathan's bedroom was still in place, as was the outhouse and a lovely set of chamber pots. A modern bathroom with an airing cupboard soon replaced the old tub, and with the help of neighbouring children with buckets and later paint brushes, the outhouse became a clubhouse.

Both the summer lake people and the local inhabitants all welcomed the Love family into their midst, many becoming lifelong friends. Vo Love's albums and journals depict and chronicle the unique quality of family life led in two quite different places. The relative solitude of Harris Lodge at the end of the green poplar lane was a



Vo with asters and Jerusalem artichoke flowers



Mary with Chris, on a fall visit in the mid 1980s, enjoying the famous fireplace

blissful retreat from being part of a bustling university campus in the heart of downtown Toronto. On a postcard of Newcastle bought in the village drug store, Vo put a pin prick where the poplar lane was clearly visible.

In early December of 1981, Chris Love spent the afternoon at the Baldwin Room of the Toronto Reference Library looking into the history of the cottage as a schoolhouse, making notes he kept for the rest of his life. He also became interested in the United Empire Loyalist history of the building, perhaps charmed by stories of Myndert Harris Jr., descendant of a loyalist escapee from New York (and relative of the Walton-Balls). For the benefit of them both, Myndert Jr. (who never married) was said to stable his horse in the hall outside his bedroom in winter for more comfortable sleeping. Among Chris' papers are notes for a play that never got written; its main character, George Smith, a blacksmith and united empire loyalist, was to struggle between principle and loyalty, finally deciding to leave for Upper Canada with his family.

The rolling countryside around Newcastle reminded the Loves of their native country Rutland in the West Midlands of England. Vo, who was born Viola, because those were the flowers her father brought in to his wife just after the birth of their eldest child, had grown up taking botany in school; she quickly found that the woods around Newcastle were full of wildflowers to learn about and to protect.

Vo also encouraged her children and their friends to find her monarch butterfly caterpillars in what was known as "the mouse field" which was also full of milkweed plants. Hugh Macdonnell was one of the "pillar" finders, as were Peggy Rogers (née Darrach) and her brothers. The caterpillars were cared for by Vo's grade four class at Havergal College in Toronto, where the resulting super generation of butterflies were launched to Mexico from the playing field. (This was before the debates about whether the caterpillars should be raised by humans, or are stronger when left in the wild to fend for themselves.)

Appropriately for a couple whose careers were in teaching, the Loves kept the old school bell going well into the 1980s, when it gave out. "The bell" summoned



Vo and Chris Love at Harris Lodge.



Chris Love in the East Room.

Jonathan and me home for meals and bedtime; if we were tardy, neighbours would let us know that our bell had already rung. In the spirit of the old schoolhouse, a blackboard for messages hung by the front door with chalk provided; at 98 years young, Mrs. LeGresley walked down from her home and left a message one afternoon, saying she had called but did not find the Loves at home.

With the help of his handyman, Chris Love kept the flat roof of the East Room, which was prone to leaks, from causing damage to the furniture or the two huge, framed photos of Queen Victoria. Chris also babied the beautiful, already old wooden windows and French doors which had been transported from Toronto (along with the huge fireplace) and which led out of the East Room onto a stone patio in need of constant weeding.

It's interesting that this grandly English room, which was added to the original schoolhouse, appears by its name to harken back to the former homeland of the UEL clans of the area. When I was at boarding school in England during my parents' sabbatical year there (1964-5), I wrote a composition about the East Room, no doubt in a homesick frame of mind. The English school mistress marking the composition chastised me in the margin in essence for giving myself airs by pretending to live in the White House!

One of those chamber pots from Harris Lodge experienced an unusual episode in its later years at the cottage. Like its fellow pot, it's possible that servants were the first people charged with emptying them in the

morning. After the first spring of the Loves' long residence, the chamber pots were ornamental, kept on top of the corner cupboard in the kitchen.

However, the one with pink flowers around the rim made a brief appearance in *The Boys from Syracuse*, performed at the Pine Ridge Festival of the Arts in August of 1969. Jonathan was in the lighting crew, while I in my role as a "French maid", emptied its contents (confetti) into the gasping audience from the tip of the stage to accompany a song about "the ladies of the evening in the morning." Vo, who would have made an extraordinary archivist in another time, wrote the year on the poster which is still in the family.

After Vo's death at Bowmanville Hospital in 1990, Chris eventually sold Harris Lodge to his closest neighbours Dorcas and Noel Gordon, the same way their relatives Horace and Molly Walton-Ball had sold it to the Loves in 1957, with almost all the original contents, but Chris gave the floral chamber pot to a friend in the village

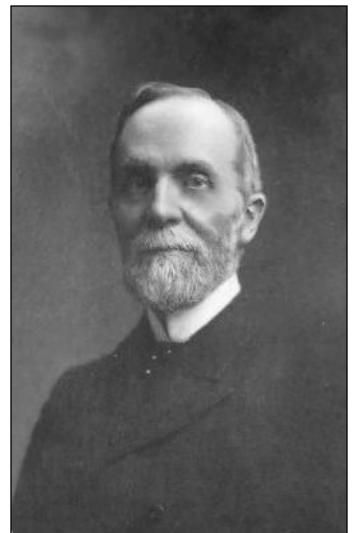
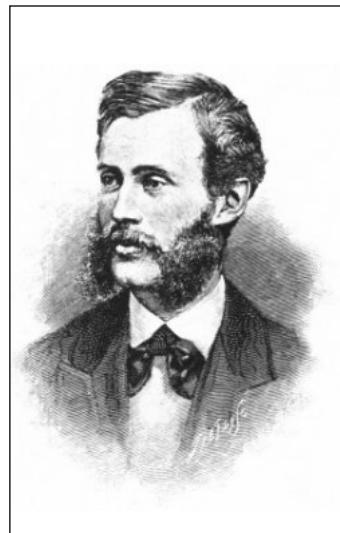
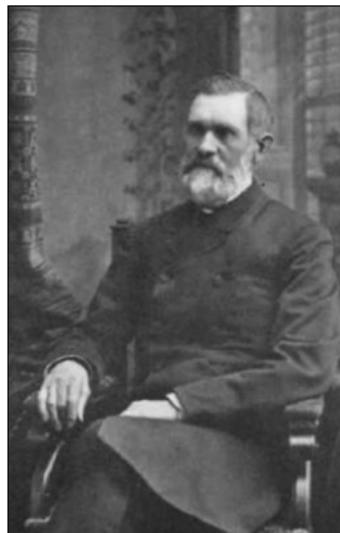
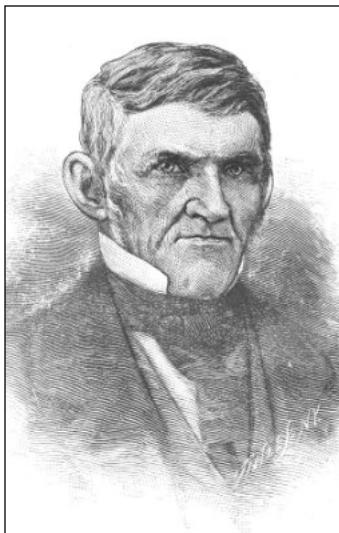
who had done some cleaning for him after Vo died, while the old bell came to rest on the Gordons' lawn.

In 2025, some say porches are having a comeback. Harris Lodge had three: the front porch with its sweet pea bed and where so many informal tea parties took place, the screened eating porch on the east side of the kitchen where the Loves and their supper guests could watch the cows come home in the distance, and the side porch which was for tasks such as cleaning off the wonderful vegetables which Uncle Lou Walton-Ball wheeled over in his barrow several times a month.

The side porch also contained the shed with all the equipment needed to care for what one English cousin called "the sophisticated wilderness" all around the cottage; fruit trees, hedges of all kinds, hugely tall volunteer Jerusalem artichokes, rhubarb, asparagus, fiddleheads, fallen branches to feed the fireplace, and always the red geraniums in the fine old urn at the top of the green lane.



Newcastle resident Cecil Carveth with Mary Love at Harris Lodge.



Three generations of Masseys: Daniel, son Hart Almerin, and grandsons Charles and Chester.

## Local Heroes – Part 4

By Brian Wilson & Paddy Duncan

*We continue this series with this question: Can the residents of a small village community make a significant, positive contribution to the world? We think they can – consider this quartet of Newcastle and district residents.*

### The Masseys

Daniel Massey was born in 1798 to Daniel Massey Sr. and Rebecca Kelley in Windsor, Vermont. Around 1802, the family moved to Canada, initially purchasing approximately 100 acres near the Village of Grafton, Upper Canada. Daniel was sent to live with his grandparents in Watertown, NY at the age of 6 to receive some education, returning around the age of 14 to take over the farm while his father and older brothers joined the Upper Canada Militia to fight in the war of 1812.

Daniel left home at the age of 19 to clear and sell land for farms. His father disinherited him – at that time, sons were expected to work the family farm until at least the age of 21. He married Lucina Bradley in 1821 and his eldest son Hart was born two years later. Daniel and his family settled down to farming in 1830, by which time he owned over 1000 acres near his father's property. That same year, he brought a mechanical thresher back from Watertown, perhaps the first imported into Upper Canada. Daniel was intrigued; this was the beginning of his work on and fascination with farm implements. He built himself a small workshop on the farm to repair implements – many of which he had brought back from visits to the US.

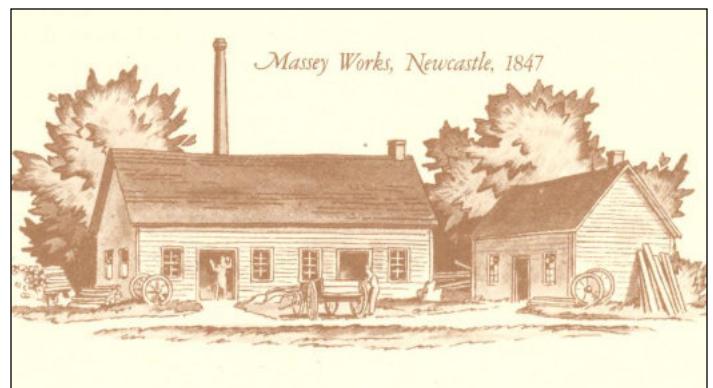
By 1844, 19-year-old Hart had taken over the farm, leaving Daniel to spend much of his time in his

workshop and in 1847, he sold the farm to Hart and with the proceeds, moved to Newcastle, where he formed a partnership with Richard F. Vaughan, (one of the promoters of the Bond Head Harbour development), who owned a struggling foundry and blacksmith shop.

Why Newcastle? Only fragments of information on the early years exist – but we do know that his wife, Lucina, had a sister Cyrena who was married to a Stephen H. Vaughan, who lived just south of the Richard F. Vaughan property in Bond Head. That house, at 579 Mill St. is still standing.

Daniel built a house in Newcastle, (finished outside in cobblestone and stucco) with a “peculiar dome and stately proportions.” The exterior was later redone in brick, and the dome was removed. The house still stands today at 285 Mill St., next to another early Newcastle house at 261 Mill St. where his daughter Frances lived with her husband William Boate.

Two years after the partnership began, Daniel had bought out Vaughan and moved the business to a new two-story brick factory on what is now King Avenue in Newcastle. Hart joined his father, eventually buying him



Massey workshop and foundry at Metcalf and Mill Streets in Newcastle, 1847.

out in 1856, 9 months before Daniel died. Daniel had provided the financial backing to Hart as interest free notes totalling £3,475, which would be about \$900,000 in today's dollars.

Known variously as Daniel Massey and Company, then H.A. Massey and Company, and later the Newcastle Agricultural Works and the Newcastle Foundry and Machine Manufactory, C.W, the business manufactured farm implements and some general machinery such as steam engines, as well as acting as a sales agent for some American manufacturers.

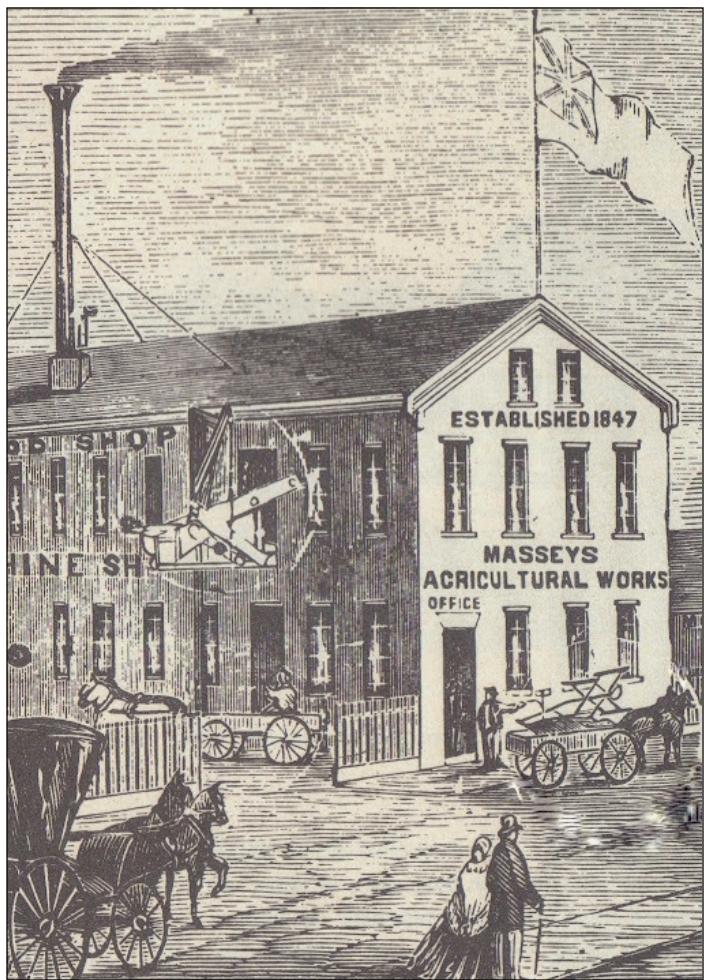
The firm was small in the mid 1850s – prosperous, but still local and competing with dozens of other small local firms trying to meet the growing demands of Canada's farmers as they explored new ways to reduce the cost of labour through mechanization.

It might well have remained little more than a local success, but Hart Massey had even bigger dreams than his father. Despite Daniel's cautions, Hart acquired the production rights to several American patents, including the Ketchum Mower and the Manny Combined Hand-rake Reaper (an example of which you can see in the Historical Room) that were to enhance the Massey foundry reputation and win them prizes

Despite a recession, Hart enlarged the Newcastle works in 1857 and an ad in the Newcastle Recorder listed everything from steam-engines to lathes and stoves as well as farm implements with "Massey's improvements." Hart was concerned about American manufacturers dumping implements in Ontario and undercutting the local producers. He shared his concerns in a meeting in Toronto and tariffs introduced in 1857-58 virtually eliminated the American competition.

The American Civil War also indirectly helped Massey and other Canadian manufacturers. US manufacturers turned their efforts toward producing military instead of agricultural equipment, reducing competition for the Canadian manufacturers in the US. Demand for labour-saving devices increased as many young men enlisted, causing a shortage of farm labour. Lower Canada was also suffering from a farm labour shortage as the population in urban areas ballooned and agriculture struggled to keep pace.

Massey was one of over 30 factories in Upper Canada in 1860 and was still a relatively small player; much of their output was still not farming implements. However, few of Massey's competitors had focused on mowers and reapers, as he began to do. Hart obtained the rights to produce a mower and self-raking reaper invented by Walter Abbott Wood of New York and put these into



Massey factory in Newcastle, circa 1862.

production. He had grasped the need for advertising and in 1861-62 produced his first illustrated catalogue, which also referenced medal awards Massey had received and successful field trials of their equipment.

A devastating fire destroyed the Newcastle Massey plant in March 1864, along with all completed orders on the premises, some partially constructed implements, and all the plant's machinery and equipment, except a few patterns. The loss was estimated to be over \$13,500 – close to \$400,000 in today's dollars – but the plant was quickly rebuilt to handle the burgeoning orders. A medal in an international exposition in France in 1867 for the Massey combined reaper-mower brought them acclaim and their first international orders. Hart brought 19-year-old son Charles Albert into the business that year.

Meanwhile, Hart Massey's prominence in Newcastle grew, as he helped fund the new brick Methodist Church on Mill St. to replace the clapboard one his father had helped build, where he also served as Sunday School Superintendent. He was also a Justice of the Peace for 20 years, served as Chief Magistrate and in 1861, was appointed coroner for the United Counties of

Northumberland and Durham. Hart was a freemason and member of Durham Lodge 66 and became head of the Durham Woollen Manufacturing Company – one of Canada's largest woolen mills. (it burned down in 1880 and relocated to Hespeler, Ontario)

1870 saw the Massey Manufacturing Company, incorporated as a join-stock firm, with Hart as president and Charles as vice-president and superintendent – clearly his father's heir. Ill-health persuaded Hart to semi-retire and he and his wife moved to Cleveland, OH, with Charles' younger siblings, where they remained until 1882. Hart became an American citizen, travelled a great deal, and became very active in Ohio's Methodist community, along with son Chester and daughter Lillian. They embraced the principles of the Chautauqua Assembly, which was a popular religious-educational movement that met in a camp setting, though it became a summer resort for wealthy Methodists.

Hart also invested in several businesses and real estate in Cleveland but was rather unsuccessful and by the time he returned to Canada, he had little to show for these endeavours and a business reputation for being “little and mean.” Luckily, Charles' astute management of Massey and relentless advertising campaigns had meant continued growth and success, helped along by continued and higher tariffs on American goods. The Massey harvester was introduced in 1878 and it was their first truly Canadian-designed machine. It was an instant success, with unprecedented demand.

Massey had now outgrown their Newcastle plant. The shipping yard, now Memorial Park, was already inadequate for their requirements. Their shipper, the Grand Trunk Railway, located about 1.5km southwest of the factory had refused to build a rail-siding spur to link their track to the factory. These factors and the larger potential workforce found in Toronto made a move there almost inevitable. It's quite possible that Charles had foreseen this, as he'd started accumulating property in



Massey Show dedication with NVDHS and Charlie Trim, in Newcastle, 2001, prior to the renovation of the old Massey factory into shops and condos. After Massey moved to Toronto, the factory sat vacant for almost four decades until J. Anderson Smith, a cabinetmaker, purchased it to make ammunition cases for WW1. After the war, the factory began making jewelry and silverware boxes. The factory closed in 1990 and again sat vacant for years before it was redeveloped.

Toronto as early as 1872. By the spring of 1879, Massey Manufacturing had acquired much of the Ordnance block on King St. west of Strachan Ave., bordering the rail yards. Hart returned to Canada to serve as superintendent of construction for the new works, and production in Toronto began in the fall of 1879. Five years later, the Toronto factory had 700 employees.

Newcastle, of course, was devastated. Much of the community had come to rely on Massey – either for employment or in providing services to the plant and employees. The Village saw a decline in population from almost 800 in the last years of the Massey operations to just 559 by the 1921 census, as many were forced to move elsewhere for jobs.

Meanwhile, the Massey company continued to acquire patents and manufacturing rights to agricultural implements, and in some cases bought other smaller companies outright. They had huge success with self-knotting binders for grain, along with another company A. Harris, Son and Company of Brantford. Son Chester moved to Toronto in 1872 to begin “Massey's Illustrated” – an advertising handout that became a periodical aimed at rural subscribers. The three Masseys – Hart, Charles and Chester, proved a formidable team in Canadian manufacturing.

Amid this success, Charles' untimely death from typhus in 1884 at the age of 35 hit his father hard. He decided that the family should never be forgotten by the public and resumed control of the company at the age of 61, taking advice only from a few trusted advisors, including his sons. The 1880s brought continued success and a major push into foreign markets, as well as battles over



Massey reaper - 1878, from an illustration in the Massey catalogue.

tariffs (some of which Massey now wanted discontinued) and some labour difficulties, and eventually, in 1891, an amalgamation with their biggest competitor, A. Harris and the formation of the Massey-Harris Company.

Hart Massey was a complex man, religiously and morally rigid, with an autocratic leadership style, all of which was to put him in conflict with his business associates and family as well as political figures and the press, but he was also increasingly philanthropic as he grew older. The 1890s were difficult – Hart's growing involvement in philanthropy and declining health left less time and attention for business resulting in tensions with son Walter who by then was largely responsible for management of the company, while battles with the government over tariffs, a failed Senate bid, and criticism from the rural press over what was now seen as a near-monopoly for Massey-Harris meant that he no longer enjoyed universal public acclaim.

During the last 5 years of his life, he supported or began an impressive array of missions and charities, from the Children's Aid Society to the Fred Victor Mission, (named in honour of his late youngest son) to an endowed theological chair at Victoria College.

Hart advertised for suggestions for how he could use his means for the "greatest good" in late 1892 and sorted through the responses, often choosing Methodist institutions. Massey Hall, a memorial to Charles was opened in 1884 with a performance of the Messiah.

Even his philanthropy was polarizing though – as some condemned his "ostentatious acts of public charity" which many believed threatened true Christianity. By his death in 1896 Hart Massey had given away more than \$300,000 and a large part of his remaining estate was distributed by his executors via the Massey Foundation.

It funded the building of Hart House and the Hart House Theatre at the University of Toronto, a renovation in 1933 of Massey Hall and the building and endowment of Massey College at U of T in 1962.

The Masseys never forgot the people who had made Massey Manufacturing possible. Chester Massey offered to fully fund the building of a Community Hall in Newcastle, which would include a Memorial Library as a perpetual memorial to the soldiers of Clarke and Newcastle who died in World War 1.

It was completed and opened in 1923, designed by architects Sproatt & Rolph who had designed Hart House and the Memorial Tower at the University of Toronto and the Manufacturer's Life Insurance Building in Toronto. It was given to the people of the village of Newcastle and was for many years run by a board of community residents. (It's now owned by Clarington and run by an appointed board).

The hall is not the only building that the Masseys gave to the community that remains today – the United Church (the former Methodist church), and the brick former manse at 133 Mill St. S. were all funded by Hart Massey. And of course, the 1865 former Massey factory building remains at the corner of Beaver and King, albeit as shops and condominium apartments.

Daniel, Hart and Chester all left lasting footprints in Newcastle, but from those humble beginnings, they helped usher in the modern age of mechanized agriculture in Canada and in doing so, became the largest agricultural implements manufacturer in the British empire, and known around the world. Massey Ferguson though now a division of US company AGCO since 1994, is still, 175 years later, a major manufacturer of agricultural equipment.



Massey donations to Newcastle: the Community Hall (1921, Chester Massey), the Methodist manse and Methodist/United Church (1860s and 1854, Hart Massey).



Mary Brown with her prize-winning flowers and vegetables.

## At the NHS flower shows, Mrs. Mary Brown wins a cup

By Don Brown

To say that my great grandmother, Mary Brown had a green thumb is an understatement. In the March 30, 1933, edition of the Canadian Statesman, Mary was described in this manner, "when you went to school and studied Euclid you learned that an axiom is a self-evident truth, such as the whole is greater than the part. Well, here's a new axiom, at the Newcastle Horticultural Society's flower shows Mrs. Mary Brown wins a cup."

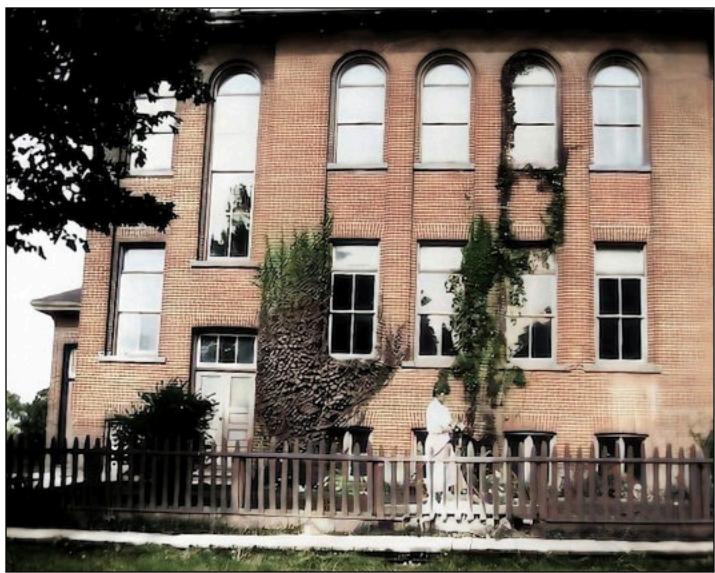
Mary Elizabeth Brown, nee Walton, was born in 1876 in Holmes Chapel, Cheshire, England. She emigrated to Newcastle from Liverpool, England in 1911 along with her husband Matthew Brown and their only child, Joseph Thomas "Tom" Brown. The Browns became members of the St. Georges church. Matthew retired in 1942 from the CPR after having served for 25 years as a "section man" at the Newcastle railway station. Mary and Matthew Brown were blessed with 3 grandchildren: Joan Mary Brown (Skelding), Robert Walton Brown and Judith Elizabeth Brown (Hope). When conjoined the middle names of Mary's grandchildren form her maiden name, Mary Elizabeth Walton!

At its spring meeting in 1931 the Horticultural society presented Mary with a small replica of the C.D. Massey

Cup, this presentation was on Mary's winning the spring show and C.D Massey trophy for three consecutive years. The society also passed a resolution that any future member accomplishing this unprecedented feat would also be given a replica trophy valued at 15 dollars.

By 1936, county Reeve and fellow Horticultural Society member W. F. Rickard had presented the prestigious C.D. Massey and Wellington Foster trophies to Mary Brown many times. On Sept 10, 1936, after winning the show Mary remarked to the room that "this was the sixth time that she had won the Wellington Foster cup," awarded annually at the fall flower show. As noted in the papers of the day, "Mrs. Brown's home was not a mansion or palatial residence with a greenhouse, it was a modest flower-filled cottage and affectionately called Glenwood Cottage by Mary and her husband Matthew."

Competition at the Newcastle horticultural shows was stiff. Many longtime Newcastle residents including Mrs. Chris Law and J. H. "Harry" Jose were also frequent winners of society competitions, but occasionally a "new person" would come along and turn heads. When Mary won the spring show on Mar 13, 1933, a notable new member of the society was Miss Neva Switzer; Neva was awarded 5 points at that show.



Mary Brown tending the gardens at St. George's Anglican Church and at the old Newcastle Public School on Beaver St. (since replaced).

Neva had recently been hired as the science and mathematics teacher at Newcastle High school. She was a spinster and lived with her mother in Whitby on a 1½ acre property that boasted a greenhouse. At the fall show in September 1933, it seems Neva had found her game, as she ended Mary's long succession of wins and wrested the Wellington Foster Cup away from her. Neva narrowly topped Mary by 2 points, 39 to 37.

Miss Switzer commented on winning that "she uses her knowledge of science to grow flowers in profusion as a hobby in her greenhouse in Whitby." However, Mary regained the cup in subsequent years and in 1936 was presented with a new silver cup.

Mary Brown was described in the Canadian Statesman as "...not only an expert grower of flowers but she is also generous with her flowers. Year-round Mary keeps a bouquet, of changing character through the seasons, in the Memorial Library in memory of Newcastle's war dead; she also remembers her church, the school, the sick and the aged." I am sure Mary Brown would be pleased that the Newcastle Horticultural Society continues to keep our village looking beautiful in 2025.



Mary Brown with her impressive collection of cups won in Newcastle Horticultural flower shows in the 1930s. Clipping from the Canadian Statesman, March 30, 1933.

### NEWCASTLE FLOWER SHOW A DECIDED SUCCESS

**Large Number of Entries and Keen Competition at Annual Horticultural Society Event — Mrs. M. Brown Again Wins Massey Cup**

The holding of a flower show in Newcastle has become synonymous with Mrs. M. Brown, Glenwood Cottage, winning a cup. A silver cup—a grand challenge cup—a Massey cup or a Foster cup or an N. H. S. cup. When you went to school and studied Euclid you learnt that an axiom is self-evident truth, a proposition which it is necessary to take for granted, such as, "The whole is greater than the part." Well, here's a new one, "At the Horticultural Society's Flower Shows Mrs. M. Brown wins a cup."

Following is a list of exhibitors with points won by them, 1st prize three points, 2nd two, and 3rd one.

Mrs. M. Brown	50
Mrs. C. T. Batty	17
Mrs. E. C. Beman	16
Mrs. Chris Law	15
Mrs. H. E. Hancock	14
Mrs. J. R. Fisher	12
Mrs. Wm. Thomas	11
Miss Neva Switzer	5
Mrs. W. E. Purdy	5
Mrs. P. Hare	4
Miss M. Wilmot	3
Mrs. J. Garrod	3
Mrs. J. E. Matchett	3
Mrs. J. Douglas	2
Mrs. J. Cunningham	2
Mr. Fred Fligg	2
Miss Trenwith	1
Mrs. C. A. Cowan	1

# Students take a deep dive into Newcastle's history

By Brian Jose

Gale Timms wants to go deep, literally, into history. She aspires to a career in underwater excavation, where expertise in both diving and history intersect to uncover the history of ships and even settlements now buried under water.

In the meantime, she is now spending her third year on dry land in the NVDHS Historical Room, building her expertise as she helps digitize the decades of hard copy that the Society has accrued.

A student in Applied Museum Studies at Algonquin College, and a local resident since the age of four, Gale is very much "home grown." She first was in the Historical Room as a primary school student on a field trip to the Community Hall, then later volunteered with NVDHS as a high school student. She is now in her second year of summer employment, funded in part by the Canada Summer Jobs programme alongside many generous donations from members of the society.

"Sometimes you come across papers or photos and say 'oh, I recognize that person,' and you learn something interesting about the place you've lived your whole life." Gale says that the Historical Room's compact space, where the archives and the displays are all in one room, make the NVDHS unique.



Ethan Swann

Compact, indeed, as Gale is shoe-horned into the NVDHS workspace with Ethan Swan, a first year NVDHS summer student who is studying History at Trent University and hopes to pursue a career in curation or ancestral research. Ethan loves the variety of being at NVDHS. "I like that there are a lot of options to work with — accession, scanning, entering information into the system, or even just researching something."

He's learned a lot about the significant influence of the Massey family in Newcastle, and is also surprised at the extensive early records that exist for this area, compared to his hometown of Tottenham. "I didn't expect the history to go back that far. We've found mortgage records from 1840," says Ethan.

Entering data will make more information accessible to the online world, and can be tedious at times, but, says Gale, "it is fun to see the donation forms, realize that you know the person who gave an item, and also to get to know the people" who are part of NVDHS.

We're glad to have both Gale and Ethan and look forward to making the results of their work available online soon.



Gale Timms

# Mark your calendars!

NVDHS General Meeting - Wednesday, October 22, 2025, 7 p.m.  
Newcastle Community Hall

## Belmont House Then and Now

Fred Kimball Graham & J.J. MacLellan

What it was like to live in Samuel Wilmot's Belmont House in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century?  
And how DO you renovate a unique and important heritage home?

Come and find out - free admission & refreshments



### Newcastle Village and District Historical Society

The Newcastle Village and District Historical Society was formed by a group of citizens in 1981 to preserve and promote the cultural heritage of the former Village of Newcastle and its immediate environs. Today, we have an extensive collection of artifacts, documents and photographs and offer help with research into the history of the area, including its businesses and families.

We are located in the former public library in the Newcastle Community Hall. We have permanent and special displays in the historical room and are open to the public twice a week. We are a registered charity, supported by our members, local sponsors and donors, with some additional assistance from the Town of

Clarington and the Government of Canada (Canada Summer Jobs). We welcome all new members and donors!

20 King Avenue, Unit 3, Newcastle, Ontario, L1B 1H7

Open: Tuesdays & Saturdays, 9:30 a.m. to noon

Website: [newcastlehistorical.ca](http://newcastlehistorical.ca)  
Email: [info@newcastlehistorical.ca](mailto:info@newcastlehistorical.ca)

Individual, family and corporate memberships are available for \$15-30/year. Memberships may be purchased or renewed on our website, in person or by mail.