



Remember the Corman House

Stoney Creek Historical Society

P.O. Box 66637, Stoney Creek, On. L8G 5E6

NEWSLETTER

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The Builders of the Women's Institutes: Men?

by Michael Gemmell

The Women's Institutes were formed in Stoney Creek, Ontario, in 1897 to aid rural women in advancing their knowledge and skills in the fields of health and family care. The organization was an early advocate of women's issues, particularly with the Ontario provincial government. The Women's Institutes successfully lobbied the Ontario government to enact legislation to enforce milk pasteurization, thereby reducing infant mortality.

The proud one hundred and one year-old history of the Women's Institutes is one of women helping women, its inception traditionally credited to Mrs. Adelaide Hoodless, a Canadian icon in women's history. The role played by a few well-meaning liberal men in the birth of the Women's Institutes in Stoney Creek, Ontario remains unremembered. While it was the drive and vision of women that led the Women's Institutes to their ultimate success, the organization could not have gotten off the ground without the support of several now-forgotten progressive men. A re-examination of the roles played by Mr. Erland Lee, Senator E.D. Smith, and others is required as the Women's Institutes organization heads into its second hundred years.

Mr. Erland Lee a prominent Saltfleet township farmer, invited Mrs. Adelaide Hoodless, an outspoken advocate of women's health and education issues, to speak to his local Farmer's Institute evening meeting in February 1897 because he was impressed with her ideas about increasing awareness of health and nutrition among Canadian rural women. A progressive man, Mr. Lee, together with his wife, Janet, helped to bring Adelaide Hoodless vision to fruition. The three co-founded the Stoney Creek Women's Institute, the first of its kind in the world. The movement later spread across Ontario, Canada, and eventually around the world, encompassing the United Kingdom, United States of America, and other nations in the Associated Country Women of the World (ACWW) organization.

Erland Lee was always regarded as a unique individual, closely linked to the formation of the Women's Institutes, yet set apart because of his gender. At the charter meeting (February 25, 1897), there were over one hundred women, but only one man, to hear Mrs. Hoodless speak. That man was Erland Lee. His wife, Janet, hand-wrote the first constitution and bylaws, and was the prime mover in establishing the annual dues at the affordable \$0.25, keeping membership open to all social classes.

The Women's Institutes flourished with little direct help from men. Initially dismissed by male farmers from the allied Farmer's Institute, the Women's Institutes have outlived their progenitor organization by over fifty years. With their unsurpassed self-sufficient success, Mr. Lee's place in the Women's Institute historiography was gradually reduced to second tier status, while that of his wife, Janet, an active participant in the events of 1897, was reduced even farther still. New names, like Mrs. E.D. (Christina) Smith, the first President of the Charter Institute, and Mrs. Laura Rose Stephen, an early organizer, coiner of the "For Home and Country" motto, and designer of the Canadian Women's Institute colours, took the Lee's place in the history books. Mr Lee's role received five paragraphs in the 1947 Ontario Women's Institute history, Fifty Years of Achievement, while that of Janet was a mere two paragraphs, their combined totals being about five hundred words in a 162 page book!

It was not until the 1960s and 70s that the winds of Women's Institute historiography began to shift. Recognition came of the role played by the Lees in organizing that important first meeting. A memorial plaque, erected by the South Wentworth District Women's Institute without the official backing of FWIO, was unveiled in front of the Lee family home in 1961. It read: "In memory of Erland Lee and his wife, Janet, who pioneered the first Women's Institute - now world wide -..."

Continued on page 4

NEW MEMBERS:

We are happy to welcome to our membership
Jean Baine, Dan & Anna Costantini, Flora McMahon,
Constance Metcalfe, Picture Palace, Royal Canadian Legion,
The Snackery, Frank White

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THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER:

Looking into the future we can only guess at what will we do tomorrow or next year?

The past is a time we can relate to, we know what happened to us yesterday, last week, last year. We know what our parents have told us, about our history, our origin. We know because someone took the time to record this information, to pass on some of the artifacts of that time. But! if we neglect to write it down or tell our children and grandchildren, or keep some of the treasures of our time, it will be lost forever.

The Stoney Creek Historical Society members have been invited again this year to hold our **potluck picnic Friday June 11** at the beautiful home of Ed and Anna Orr 1376 Highway #8 with social time beginning at 5.30 pm. and supper at 6.30 pm. Your phone contact will be in touch. This will be the final function before summer. I look forward to seeing everyone again in September. **Have a safe and happy summer.**

Ron Place

ERLAND LEE (MUSEUM) HOME

The Museum is now open for 1999. The Erland Lee Museum got a jump start on the season by two weeks with our successful *March Break* program. This was our first attempt in years to produce a March Break program at the Erland Lee Museum, and we met our modest attendance targets. We took notes to improve next year. We were particularly busy Monday and Tuesday, March 15-16th, when the museum's themes were Pioneer Life and the Lee Dairy Farm respectively. A related scavenger hunt through the back lawn and grounds of the museum was also a hit. We plan on using those same themes in our spring educational programs. We hope to eventually bring classes from every school in the city to the museum to help Stoney Creek students learn a bit more about the roots of their community.

May at the Erland Lee Museum features Queen Victoria's birthday celebrations, Saturday and Sunday, May 22 - 23, 1999. This is our own celebration of the (then) reigning monarch's birthday. In 1897, the museum's time-focus, Victoria was beloved by the people of the British Empire, including Stoney Creek, Ontario. There are no special fees, just regular admission prices.

The next big event on the Erland Lee Museum schedule is our June Luncheon, Tuesday and Wednesday, June 15 - 16, 1999. Luncheon sittings are at 11:30 am and 1:00 pm both days (4 sittings in total). We will feature a **home made buffet luncheon** fund-raiser as the centrepiece to a general celebration of 102 years of Women's Institutes vitality. Tickets cost for this fresh-food delight is tentatively set at \$12.00, but is subject to change. The cost includes a tour of museum. Regular admission to museum without lunch also available. This event requires *reservations*.

Finally, join us for Heritage Craft Day, Saturday, June 26, 1999 from 9:00 am - 3:00 pm

Heritage crafting techniques will be taught on site in two half-day sessions. The four sessions being offered in 1999 are **Herbs for Health, Twist Paper Basket Weaving, Knitted Dishcloth, and a Quilted Project**. These are all Beginner level. No experience is required. The Cost/person is \$25.00 + Kit cost (under \$5.00), and includes two sessions, lunch, refreshments, and a tour of the museum. Regular admission to museum without heritage crafting is also available. *Reservations* are required.

Canada Day gets a Victorian twist at the Lee. Please join us for Dominion Day at the Lee, Thursday, July 1, 1999. Explore 1897 Ontario's view of Canada within the British Empire. Exhibits featuring Women's Institutes involvement in patriotic activities 1897-1914 will be on display. Regular admission applies, but there are no special fees.

The Erland Lee Museum Home, located at 552 Ridge Road, Stoney Creek (right at the top of Dewitt Road) is open Tuesday through Saturday, 10:00 am - 4:00 pm, and Sunday afternoons, 1:00 pm - 5:00 pm. Please contact us for further information about any of these events at 905 662 2691 (fax 905 662 2045) or via e-mail at erlandlh@icom.ca, or visit our web page at <http://www.fwio.on.ca/fwio/promo.html>

Michael Gemmill

REPORT FROM BATTLEFIELD HOUSE

by Marnie Hutchinson

One hundred years ago, Sara Calder, granddaughter of James and Mary Gage, had the great foresight to preserve the house that had been built by her ancestors and that had stood amidst the brutal combat of the Battle of Stoney Creek. It was 1899 and the old Gage farmhouse was in a state of disrepair. At a sale price of \$1,900, the Men's Pioneer and Historical Society of Wentworth had refused to buy the home. It was up to the Ladies' Auxiliary of this society, led by Mrs. Calder, to ensure Stoney Creek the preservation of a piece of its pioneer heritage. The Women's Wentworth Historical Society raised \$900 towards the purchase of the house and Sara Calder, as the Society's first president, signed a mortgage for the balance. Battlefield House, as it came to be known, and four and a half acres of land, had been saved for posterity. The same year the Society purchased the Gage house, it opened the grounds as a public park, with a ceremony officiated by Lady Aberdeen. Now, one hundred years later, the staff and volunteers at Battlefield House are planning a special celebration to mark the 100th anniversary of the opening of Battlefield Park. This very exciting event will take place on August 21, 1999 and will feature a re-enactment of the opening of the Park, complete with Lady Aberdeen in all her pomp and glory.

Continued on page 3

LOYALISTS AND PIONEERS:

Stephen Bedell, sometimes spelled Beadle, was a native of Staten Island, N. Y., who came to Canada in the early years of settlement. The exact date of his arrival has not been recorded but he settled on Lot 10, Concession III, Saltfleet township, which on the first map of that township was in the name of Jacob Smith Sr., Stephen Bedell's wife was named Susan and they are both buried in the old historic burying ground at Stoney Creek. The dates on their stones were -Stephen Bedell, 1745-1837 - Susan Bedell born at Whitehall, New York, 1763, died 1847.

At least three and perhaps four of their children came with them -David, Stephen, Jr., Anna and Sarah, who married a McDougall (Allen) one of the first settlers in Saltfleet.

David Bedell, who was born about 1783 settled in Saltfleet also as his name appears on assessment rolls of that twp. His wife's name was Mary and she was buried in Stoney Creek burying ground, the inscription on her stone reading: -"Mary, wife of David Bedell, died 1846 age 63 years." A daughter Frances, who married Joshua Knight of Saltfleet 5 Feb., 1838, was buried by the side of Mary, died also in 1846 age 29 years. There were probably other children or grandchildren of David and Mary Bedell as a later voters' list gives the name of George Bedell, Lot 29, Conc. III, Barton - William, Lot 32, Conc. IV, Barton - John, Lot 26, Cone. II, Saltfleet and R. Bedell Lot 11, Cone. III, Saltfleet.

Stephen Bedell, Jr. was born in 1788, married Magdalene (surname unknown) and was the son who lived on the home farm and built the stone house pictured on the opposite page. He and his wife are buried by the side of Stephen Bedell Sr.: - Stephen Bedell, b. 1788, d. 1875 - Magdalene, wife of, b. 1794, d. 1840.

The probable children of Stephen Jr. and Magdalene Bedell - order uncertain:-

Harriet, born 1815, married 14 Feb., 1840, to John, son of John Charles Pettit of Saltfleet, died 19 Nov., 1889, buried in family plot at The Fifty burying ground. Children:- Edward, Murray, Morilla, Cynthia, Sarah, Albert.

Stephen, born 1818, married 25 Oct., 1845, to Sarah Tweedle, died 1849, buried at Tapleystown.

Bathsheba, born 1819, married Jeremiah Lee, Saltfleet, died 1895, buried at Stoney Creek.

Maria Louisa, married Elijah, son of Jacob and Rebecca (French) Smith 3 Oct., 1848.

Jeremiah, born 1826, wife Mary. They lived on the home farm and had two daughters - Robena Pringle and Helena Kimmons. Jeremiah died in 1871 and was buried in the family plot at Stoney Creek. His widow, Mary Bedell married secondly W. K. Secord and is buried in St. Andrew's churchyard, Grimsby. Date of birth and death 1835-1885.

John G., born 1828, married Madeline, daughter of John Smith of Saltfleet. John exchanged his land with his brother Jeremiah and lived on top of the escarpment - Lot 6, Cone. IV, Saltfleet. They had children:- Jane, Ada, Sarah, Clara,

Bathsheba, John and probably Stephen. John Bedell died in 1905, Madeline in 1883. They are buried at Fruitland.

Samuel Bedell, wife Mary, who lived on Lot 11, Conc. VI, Saltfleet, may have been another son of Stephen, Jr. Two children of Samuel and Mary are buried in St. George's churchyard, Tapleystown.

Anna Bedell, daughter of Stephen Bedell, Sr., born about 1795, married Charles, son of John Charles Pettit in 1817. They moved from Saltfleet to Brant County. Children:- Susannah, Martha, Joseph, John G., Stephen, Rachel, Mary, Almira Bedell, born 1822, d. 1884, married Joseph Tweedle. A branch of the Bedell family settled in Prince Edward county. Records give the names of William, Enoch and George Bedell.

The following extracts are from ANNALS OF HEMPSTEAD (Long Island):-

Value of Property	11 Oct. 1683
Matthew Bedell	1 head
Robert Bedell	1 head
Robert Bedell, Jr.	1 hd., 25 acres, 4 oxen, 1 horse
David Bedell	1 hd.. 4 oxen, 2 horses

About 1780 Stephen Pettit married Sarah Bedell, at St. George's Church, Hempstead.

Taken from the Annals of the Forty book NO.3 page 37

Continued from page 2

In order to commemorate the last one hundred years in a unique way, the Park will be set up with interactive displays highlighting each decade from the 1890s to the 1990s. Each tent will present the most significant events and trends of each decade, complete with music, dancing and vintage clothing. How about trying the hula-hoop or bubble-gum blowing contests?

Entertainment and activities for the whole family at the Centennial Celebration will include horse and carriage rides, Scottish country dancers, a marching band, skipping demonstrations, a barbershop quartet, an antique car exhibition and much more. Drop by the tent depicting the history of Stoney Creek, where present and former Stoney Creek residents might just meet up with old friends.

The Centennial Celebration of Battlefield Park promises to be a fun and unique way to recognize and celebrate the distinct heritage of Stoney Creek. In order to raise funds to support this event, a huge Yard Sale will be held in Battlefield Park on May 15th (rain date May 16th). Gather up your odds and ends, rent a table for \$20 (\$10 for an additional table) and put your things up for sale in one of the most visible places in the City. For more information or to book a table, please call 662-8458.

Battlefield House has certainly planned other special events for the spring and summer. Battle Weekend takes place June 5 and 6, with children's activities, period encampments,

Continued on page 10

Continued from page 1

Few people in 1897 would have willingly tramped up and down the frozen Canadian countryside in an open sleigh, personally inviting isolated farm women to come and hear Mrs. Hoodless speak, but the Lees did so because both Janet and her liberal husband believed in the ideas being preached.

In 1967, Erland Lee was officially designated a co-founder alongside Adelaide Hoodless, and a Government of Ontario Archeological and Historic Sites Board historical plaque unveiled alongside an earlier informal one placed by the local Women's Institutes.

In 1972 the Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario purchased the Lee family home from the descendants of Erland and Janet. The \$40 000 purchase was part of an FWIO design to compliment the 1959 acquisition of the Adelaide Hunter Hoodless Homestead by the Federated Women's Institutes of Canada. The Hunter Homestead, while lacking the direct connection to the birth of the Women's Institutes that the Erland Lee Home has, was the birthplace and childhood home of Mrs. Hoodless (ne Hunter). Both sites maintain a friendly rivalry, an outgrowth of their owning organization's occasional provincial-federal rivalry.

Both Erland Lee and Adelaide Hoodless are now recognized in Ontario as co-founders. Janet Lee, however, remains relegated to second-class status, despite her efforts in 1897. Between the 1961 South Wentworth plague at the Lee Home and the 1967 official FWIO and Ontario governmental plague, the wording shifted from "Erland Lee, and his wife, Janet..." to "Erland Lee...assisted by his wife..." There is also no mention in 1967 of Janet's role in drafting the 1897 constitution. Mrs. Hoodless, unmentioned in the 1961 plague, is listed as "persuading" local women to form an organization. Even in her own obituary, Janet is listed as "one of the first officers of the Women's Institute", an organization "...headed by Mrs. Adelaide Hoodless and the late Mr. Lee..."

It remains to be seen if such historiographical machinations will be resolved. For the time being, Adelaide Hoodless has her homestead and plague, Erland Lee has his home and plague, and Janet Lee remains as shadowy appendage to her husband's work.

Erland Lee was not entirely alone in his role of a man influencing the Women's Institute movement. For nearly a century the Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario were attached directly to the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, a government bureaucracy dominated by an all-male agenda. The Ontario government-appointed Superintendents of the Women's Institutes, whose job titles also included superintendent of the Farmer's Institutes, during the formative years of the Women's Institutes were exclusively male. The Farmer's Institutes were the forerunners to the Women's Institutes, started in 1884 to facilitate distribution of new farming ideas and technologies in the rural community. Perhaps

not coincidentally, the Farmer's Institutes were also formed in Wentworth County and Erland Lee was a charter member and the first Secretary. Both Erland Lee and Adelaide Hoodless initially conceived of the Women's Institutes as a Ladies' Auxiliary affiliated with the Farmer's Institutes. It was in his capacity as an executive member of the Wentworth Farmer's Institute that Mr. Lee opened the first Women's Institute meeting before stepping back and turning things over to the local farm women.

Mr. F.W. Hodson, who accepted Mrs. Hoodless petition for affiliation by the Women's Institutes with the Farmer's Institutes, was a strong advocate for women's issues in rural society. His successor, Dr. G.C. Creelman, brought an organizational structure to the mushrooming numbers of Ontario Women's Institutes, which was later used successfully by Mrs. Alfred (Madge) Watt when she brought the Women's Institute movement to the United Kingdom in 1915. The first British Women's Institute was established in September of that year in Llanfair PG, Wales.

Two other gentlemen, Senator E.D. Smith and Major F.M. Carpenter, were also involved in the beginnings of the Women's Institutes, although their names are even less remembered in the organization's annals than that of Janet Lee.

Senator E. D. Smith, a jam and fruit products magnate before 1945, and Major F.M. Carpenter, Member of Parliament for Wentworth, were an integral part of the 1897 creation of the Women's Institutes. Senator Smith and Major Carpenter served as a legal advisor and witness at the February 19, 1897 signing meeting when the constitution and bylaws for the first Women's Institute were drawn up in the Lee home. Senator Smith's wife, Christina, became the first President of the Charter Institute. She later became President in 1905 of the newly formed Winona Women's Institute. Today the E.D. Smith & Sons company is a major player in the Canadian canned fruit and vegetables industry. Their trademark box-shaped jam jar is sold worldwide. These two gentlemen's role has been minimized by the same forces that ignored Erland Lee, but in reality the influence that these two male politicians wielded was considerable. Together with the advocacy of Mr. Lee, Saltfleet Township Clerk for nineteen years, and active executive member of the Liberal-Conservative Associations of Wentworth and Saltfleet, the three men left a legacy to the Women's Institutes of nearly a century of influence into the Ontario Provincial and Canadian Federal Ministries of Agriculture. This relationship, which made the Women's Institutes the primary lobby group for rural women, led to substantial governmental support from 1900-1990; free newsletter printings, conferences hosted (such as 1953's ACWW conference in Toronto, Ontario), office space provided, and a direct link to rural policy-making.

There are even a few male members of the modern Women's Institutes in Canada. In 1977, the Hamilton Spectator reported

Continued on page 5

Continued from page 4

the organization's first male member. A formal driver of his mother to her local branch's meetings, the unnamed man stayed on to become an active member. The faintly comic air to the report should not overlook the many low-key contributions by "WI husbands" or, in this case, sons. In short, a male presence existed in the early Women's Institute movement, even if it was not at the ground level, nor involved in day-to-day activities

It should therefore not be too great a stretch that the new curator of the Erland Lee (Museum) Home is a man. Michael Gemmell (26) was hired to look after the Lee home and museum in July 1998. In doing so, he became the first male curator of the historic site following a line of female curators dating back to the Erland Lee Museum's opening in 1972. In 1998, one hundred and one years after the Stoney Creek birth of the Women's Institutes, there is still a small male presence at the heart of an organization dedicated, now as much as then, to upholding women's social issues.

Further Reading: The best history of the Women's Institutes in Ontario is the centennial publication, For Home and Country (1996), by Linda Ambrose. She draws from earlier works; 1972's Ontario Women's Institute Story, and Fifty Years of Achievement (1947). The traditional recounting of the life of Adelaide Hoodless has been chronicled in Cheryl MacDonald's Adelaide Hoodless, Domestic Crusader (1986), and an excerpt appeared in the August-September 1986 issue of the Beaver. There is unfortunately, no similar work on Mr. Erland Lee. For a British perspective, Gwen Garner's Extraordinary Women (1995) examines how the movement travelled overseas by 1915.

I REMEMBER

The following column by Constance Metcalfe will conclude in the October 1999 issue.

**WESTERN SALTFLEET! ANOTHER FRUIT
FARMING FAMILY:
by Constance Metcalfe**

Inspired by Gordon Dean's article, "A Fruit Farming Family in Eastern Saltfleet" in the newsletter May 1988, I am writing to add some detail of the period from my own experience. Well, perhaps not quite the same period. I think I am of an earlier generation and my memory extends further back.

Like Mr. Dean, I was raised on a farm in Saltfleet, but unlike him, in a family recently settled there. My father, an Englishman, had come to Canada as a young man in 1905 and my mother had arrived from England as a very young woman with her family in 1912, so that we had no connection with pioneer families as the Deans had. Perhaps that explains a slightly different experience of farming in the Niagara Peninsula. Our home farm was at the north-east corner of Barton St. and Gray's Sideroad and we had outlying acreage on Green

Sideroad and on Gray's. The home farm, according to early maps had originally been owned by Thomas Stewart but my father bought it from a man named McIntyre. The house I knew (now demolished) was a large, three story, white frame structure with 4 large bay windows in a style still to be seen further east in the peninsula. It was, however, only half of the original house. McIntyre had sold the back half which had then been moved several hundred yards to the east and there made into a house only slightly smaller than ours. Both houses had front and back porches, entrance halls and formal open staircases, large rooms, 4 or 5 bedrooms and third floor attics. Together they must have been an enormous house. Only a few acres, perhaps 3 - 4, went with the second house and no buildings. These all remained on what became our land. There had been a large bank barn with stabling underneath but this had burned in McIntyre's time, leaving the stone foundations and, nearby, a wonderful well, — stone-built and capped, deep and never known to fail, — indeed the level of the water never varied.

There were 3 other good wells on the farm and an ever-flowing stream of drink-able water on the section west of Gray's Sideroad which had been bought from the Tweedle estate. There were edible fish in that stream in the 30's, moving upstream to spawn in the spring time. The map in the Saltfleet Atlas shows it rising just south of the C.N.R. tracks, - that is, somewhere in our peach orchard. In fact, it was much longer and must have had its source just north of No. 8 hwy., perhaps in a spring on Col. Van Wagner's farm. I don't remember that it crossed No. 8 hwy. but it certainly crossed Barton St. in a shallow valley and through a large culvert, and then on through acreage owned by a family called Burgoyne, and onto our land. By that time it had developed a quite deep, steep sided valley. It crossed under the C.N.R. tracks in a very large culvert and ran on North-east to cross Gray's Sideroad before it entered Lake Ontario in an area known as Community Beach.

And that "Gray's Sideroad", will always be the name of that road for me, rather the bland and meaningless "Gray Road" of to-day. The sideroads were part of the original survey of the township and they were named for early settlers on them. Other roads, such as the roads now known as Green Road and McNeilly and Lewis roads were originally sideroads with a name in the possessive case.

Why were the original names abandoned? They had a meaning which is lost in the present form.

Gordon Dean speaks of his vague memory of a cow somewhere about the farm and I am certain that this was usual for a Niagara fruit farm, - but not so, ours. My father had had experience with cattle and sheep on his father's farm in England and was always as interested in animals as in fruit. In what had been the driving shed, converted into stables after the fire, we kept 5 or 6 cows, Guernseys and Jerseys, at a time. They were pastured along farm headlands and on the road sides, which then had deep ditches with clean water, and wide, grassy banks untouched by chemicals.

Another farmer in Saltfleet who kept cattle was Alvin Corman, whose cows (Holsteins in his case) were pastured in

Continued on page 6

Continued from page 5

the field opposite the front doors of the old High School on Gray's Sideroad. They often came to meet us in the morning at the corner of Gray's and No. 8 and walked with us along the fence to the top of the field at King Street, —company on the long walk to school.

What Mr. Corman did with his milk I do not know, but in the 20's and 30's, before compulsory pasteurization, we sold ours to our cow-less neighbours, fed and fattened pigs and calves and made butter. Before refrigeration, the milk was set out in wide shallow pans on the pantry shelves "to rise". The risen cream was skimmed off in thick heavy folds to be used as whipped cream, which we ate on everything including bread, or to be churned into butter. The churn I remember was a "modern" affair at the time. It was a large glass jar equipped with wooden paddles turned by a ratchet and handle, - egg beater style. It had come, I think in 1932, from Eaton's catalogue, as did many other necessities.

This was not only before pasturization and refrigeration, it was before compulsory tuberculin testing as well. However, tuberculosis had come close enough to the family to frighten our parents and our cows were always T.B. tested. Who did the testing I do not recall but I do remember, vividly, the doctor (Dr. Freeman?) coming out from Stoney Creek to test the children. This was a daunting experience involving a huge needle and a painful jab.

As well as the cows and pigs, there was always a flock of Plymouth Rock hens for meat and eggs and a flock of Bantams for amusement; - though we sometimes ate the tiny eggs if we could find them. "The bantees" ran wild and hid away their nests. So, too, did the three guinea fowl we had for a short time. They were an Easter gift, intended as children's pets, but they were strange beasts and totally unfriendly. They roosted at first with the hens; then, in rebellion at being shut up at dusk in the hen house, in the big elm tree over the barn, then further off until we saw them no more.

Saltfleet, even then, was too settled and too densely populated for there to be many wild creatures about. There were rabbits in plenty, which were eaten by some people, though not by us. Our contact with the rabbit world was Peter, a wild cottontail, who, in spite of her name, raised several broods of bunnies in and around the stables, helping herself to grain and hay. Pheasants were often seen and the wild geese stopped overnight each year on their way to and from the Arctic to rest and feed in our wheat field beside the C.N.R. tracks. All geese were migratory then, - there was no resident population.

There were always harmless snakes around, and creatures we called turtles though they should have been called tortoises. We often kept one for a few days as a pet. True turtles were in the swamps at the end of all the streams along the lake shore. Some very large ones were discovered (and inevitably destroyed) when the swamps were drained to build the Q.E.W.

Because we had the stables and the fodder, our farm was the township pound. Every year a letter with a cheque for

one dollar arrived, informing my father that he had been appointed pound keeper again. I don't remember that he was ever consulted, nor do I remember an animal ever being sent to his care.

He was a good horseman who misunderstood all things mechanical, especially tractors. Even after we had, first a Fordson and then a Massey Harris tractor, he continued to use horses. There was always a team of heavy horses and a light horse. The most memorable of these was Blackie, a Morgan mare, an opinionated and obstinate creature who refused to be defeated by anything. The heavy horses I remember best were a pair of Clydesdales, Bess and Duke, who did the ploughing and heavy hauling. The Morgan travelled the roads and drew the wagon we called "the lorry" as well. This was a high flat platform on tall wheels used to collect baskets and bushels from orchard and graperly.

QUERY (1) *Was this vehicle typical of the Peninsula? or perhaps unique to it? "Lorry" is an English word - was it in general use or did Canadian farmers have a different name for it?*

QUERY (2) *We always used the term "graperly" rather than the European "Vineyard". Was this also unique to Niagara? Vineyard seems now to have replaced graperly - at least in the Spectator of to-day.*

In the winter, the heavy team was on occasion, hitched to the ponderous bob sleigh to haul grain and other supplies from "the village". - always so-called and never referred by its map name of Stoney Creek. Some people spoke of it as "The Crick" but we, as children, were forbidden to use this term. It was not quite proper enough. In those days the gravelled roads were always snow covered in winter, making the going easy for sleighs but difficult for children walking to school and for the few cars about. No.8 highway was ploughed, but not the sideroads. One of the distinctive sights on these roads was "old" Dr. Green in his horse-drawn vehicles. Was the summer one a racing sulky? And the winter one a cutter? In any case it was light and the horse always well bred and fast. He drove, I think for recreation. I'm sure he must have had a car for house calls. Another horse-drawn vehicle to be seen regularly, was Mr. Martineau's buggy. He drove his daughter to and from the farm on Gray's sideroad to catch a bus on No. 8 to go to work in Hamilton. Probably only a few years older than we were, she was always known to us as Miss Martineau. And so too, was Miss Anne Hawe, whose brother George, drove her every morning from the farm on Green's sideroad to catch the same bus. She taught in Hamilton. Children were expected then to refer to their elders by their formal title.

Teachers, of course, were always addressed formally, as was Miss Hurd, the village librarian. The library, at the corner of Jones and King in Stoney Creek, consisted of two rooms. The first contained Miss Hurd's desk and the children's books; the second, which we were not allowed to enter, books for adults. There was no library at the public school, — only a bookcase at the back of Miss Rae's room with books I think

Continued on page 9

FROM THE PAST:

Wentworth Historical Society Minutes
1908 -1948

March 9, 1910

The Annual Meeting of this Society was held in the Parish Hall, Stoney Creek. Meeting opened at 8.30 p.m., President Corman in the chair.

There were present Pres. W.E.Corman, J.Gardner, J.H.Land, Justus Griffin of Hamilton also Charles Moore, J.F.Felker, J.W.Green, Dillie Coleman, Rev.W.G.Davis, Sec.Treas., Donald McInnes.

The Secretary read minutes of last meeting which were adopted.

The Treasurer's Report, including Township Grant of \$ 200.00

Receipts - Improvement Fund	\$ 214.54	
Expenses -	\$5.50	Bal. \$ 209.04
Receipts - General Fund	\$ 11.95	
Expenses -	\$ 4.75	Bal. \$ 7.20
Total Balance in Traders Bank		\$ 216.24

Audited and found correct, J.W.Green, J.F.Felker, auditors.

It was moved by J.W.Green, seconded by Mr.Griffin, that Treasurer's and Auditors report be adopted. CARRIED.

Election of Officers resulted as follows -

Hon. President - Mr.E.D.Smith, Winona
President - Mr.W.E.Corman, Stoney Creek
Vice President - Mr.Erland Lee
Sec'y Treas. - Rev.W.G.Davis
Executive Com.- All the Officers

J.F.Felker, J.C.Moore, Col.Ptolemy, J.W.Green, Donald McInnes, R.E.Glover, Mrs.Fessenden, Hamilton Lee, Dillie Corman, Mr.L.L.D.Evans.

It was moved by Dillie Corman, seconded by Justus Griffin, that the following members act as the Building Com. for Monument - Pres. W.E.Corman, - J.C.Moore, J.F.Felker, J.Gardner, Rev. W.G.Davis, CARRIED.

It was then moved by J.F.Felker, seconded by D.Coleman, that the building com. proceed to call tenders for the work of preparing foundation and erecting a 12 foot base for Monument. CARRIED.

It was understood that this Society was to prepare foundation & erect the base and become responsible for this part of the work also to supply the material for same.The President kindly promised to arrange bees for hauling sand & stone, to have same on the grounds in time for the work.

fees collected at the meeting was \$ 4.00 being for 16 members. There being no further business it was then moved by J.F.Felker, seconded by D.McInnes that this meeting adjourn.

(Rev.)W.G.Davis

Minutes confirmed, W.E.Corman.

The History of the Stoney Creek Cemetery:

From O.G.S.transcribing May 17, 1980.

MUNICIPAL CEMETERY STONEY CREEK, ONTARIO

This cemetery is located on lot 27,concession 4 in the former township of Saltfleet, Wentworth County, now in the City of Hamilton, in the Region of Hamilton Wentworth.

The property was first occupied by John McDavid sometimes spelled McDeade, who was allowed to live there by an Order In Council issued in 1792. He became the Crown Patentee of the 100 acres of lot 27 on May 27, 1822.

A Methodist Episcopal Chapel was built about 1792 on the hill in the central area of the present cemetery. Mary Gage who had come to the Stoney Creek area about 1790 was an early driving force in the formation of the Church. She was a sister of the surveyor Augustus Jones.

The cemetery was in use from about the time that the Chapel was built. As Hamilton was not even a village at that time, the road near the Chapel was known as the Ancaster - Niagara road.

The Chapel was used as a barracks following the war of 1812-14. It was refurbished in 1821 by the British with money paid as recompense for damages during the war of 1812-14.

As far as can be determined no soldiers killed in the battle of Stoney Creek in the war of 1812-14 were buried here. They were interred on the north side of King St. across the road from the Battlefield Monument about two city blocks east of the cemetery. Probably about 100 of the British and American soldiers were placed in a common grave. A memorial cairn shows the site but no markers were erected.

James Gage bought the north-east corner of lot 27 from John McDavid and he donated the part where the Chapel and cemetery were located to the Methodist Church in 1830. Until 1823 no Church other than the Anglican Church could own land. Before that the land that was occupied by a Church and cemetery was still owned by the person in whose name the whole lot was registered.

In 1871 the Chapel was again refurbished by Wesleyan Methodist who had taken possession in 1833. In 1833 this Congregation left the meeting house and joined the Episcopal Congregation on the north side of King Street. The building was then allowed to go to ruin and eventually demolished.

In 1911 the cemetery was closed to the public, only Church members and adherents to be buried there. In 1913 the cemetery was turned over to the township and 2 1/2 acres were purchased from William Nash. Since 1959 the cemetery has been managed by the Cemetery Board of Hamilton.

We are indebted to Mr. Milton Watson of Stoney Creek for much of this history.

MEMBERSHIP:

Are you uncertain as to your membership status?
To the right of your name lable on the newsletter is the year your membership is paid for.

**HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEMBERS
BUSINESS/INSTITUTION DIRECTORY:**

Anne Forsyth Accounting	Anne Forsyth	9 Lake Ave. South	662-2848
Britannia Cleaners	Ed Strecker	17 King St. E.	662-4971
Comic1 Books	Tom Laing	Elm/King Plaza	664-3777
Erland Lee Museum Home	Michael Gemmell	552 Ridge Road	662-2691
H/W Archaeological Fdn.	Rita Griffin-Short	Hamilton	524-1384
Doug Mays Watercolourist	Doug & Angela Mays	3 MacDui Dr.	643-4541
Picture Palace	Joanne Wynhofen	19 King St. E.	662-4014
Queenston Stationery	Martin Battell	38 King St.E.	664-3360
Rotary Club of Stoney Creek		P.O Box 66655	573-3584
Royal Canadian Legion	Branch 622	12 King St. E.	662-4171
Spera House Antiques	Lyn & Brent Jukes	228 Ridge Road	662-9339
The Snackery	Carol Dushko	Elm/King Plaza	664-2288

MENTION THIS DIRECTORY WHEN YOU SUPPORT OUR MEMBERS!

WESTFIELD VILLAGE:

1. **Victoria Day Picnic** May 23-24, 12:30-4 PM
Experience 1899 at Westfield during a Victoria Day Picnic
 2. **American Civil War Re-enactment** August 7, 8 The
Battle of Chickamauga
- For further information Call (519) 621-8851 or on the
Web www.chatworld.com/public/westfield/westfl.htm

SPONSOR A NEWSLETTER:

Would you like to sponsor an edition of the newsletter?
A \$30.00 donation helps with the expense of printing and
mailing the Stoney Creek Historical Society Newsletter.
A tax receipt will be issued.
Please contact Ron Place 662-8856

**Next newsletter will be issued Wed., October 6 1999
Material deadline is Wednesday, September 15 1999**

Stories, News or Queries can be mailed to

Ron Place
56 Wyngate Ave.
Stoney Creek, On. L8G 1T6
E-mail rplace@bestnet.org

Continued from page 6

she contributed herself, and which we were allowed to read if we hurried to finish our class work early. The library at the High School was not much more extensive, consisting only of a glass fronted bookcase in the Principal's outer office.

These limited resources exhausted, we relied on newspapers for reading material. We subscribed to three papers. The Hamilton Spectator was delivered to the mailbox at the end of our laneway, and was read every evening after supper. The Family Herald and Weekly Star came by post from Montreal every Saturday. It was full of serious articles on farming and what was then considered appropriate for women - recipes and dress and patterns. What was especially important to me was that every week there would be the next chapter of a novel that was being serialized. It takes a long time to read a book a chapter a week. The third paper was from Penrith, in England. It, too, was a weekly, but because it came by sea it often came in shipments of several issues at a time. All mail moved more slowly then; by rail if by land and by ship from overseas. Remarkably, the Penrith Herald came, more or less regularly, all through the war. Shipments were delayed to wait for convoys but only once was a whole batch missing. We thought it likely that a mail ship had gone down. The arrival of the English papers was so special an occasion that we were even allowed to cut corners on our homework to have time to read about a world beyond our own.

SUMMER EVENTS:

BATTLE WEEK-END: June 5 - 6
Entertainment for the whole family, Crafts, Wagon Rides, Battle Re-enactment.

FLAG DAY FESTIVAL WEEK: Sunday June 6th to June 13th.

FLAG DAY PARADE Saturday June 12th. 2.00 pm.

The Stoney Creek Historical Society will again have an entry of old cars. Come out and cheer them on.

WINONA PEACH FESTIVAL August 27,28, 29.
Winona Park. Crafts, Rides and PEACH SUNDIES.

BATTLEFIELD PARK 100th. ANNIVERSARY: Saturday August 21st.
Displays, friendship, more information call 662-8458

COMMUNITY NEWS:

1926

Stoney Creek will without doubt at some early date have a water system which will require a drain to take away the waste, and if a pipe four times the size of the one now being put down through Lake avenue was laid it certainly would be more serviceable for that purpose and save double the expense, which must come sooner or later.

**Stoney Creek Historical Society
1999 Executive**

President:	Ron Place	662-8856
Past President:	Mary Lewis	643-3665
1st. Vice President:	Bill O'Reilly	662-2248
2nd. Vice President:	Bill Mitchell	664-4576
Treasurer:	Milt Henderson	662-1035
Recording Secretary:	Nancy Kinsman	662-2900
Corresponding Secretary:	Anna Orr	643-7653
Newsletter:	Ron Place	662-8856

VISITORS AND NEW MEMBERS WELCOME

MEETINGS ARE HELD AT STONEY CREEK CITY HALL,
SALTFLEET ROOM

1st. WEDNESDAY OF EACH MONTH BEGINNING AT 7.30 pm.
SEPTEMBER TO JUNE

COFFEE AND REFRESHMENTS FOLLOW

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION \ RENEWAL \ DONATIONS

(Please print)

Date: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____ Apt.: _____

City: _____ Postal Code: _____ Phone: _____

(Please check)

____ Renewal: _____ New:

Membership

Family	\$15.00
Single	\$ 12.00
Student/Senior.....	\$ 7.00
Business/Institution.....	\$ 20.00

Donation to funds

General Fund.....	\$ _____
Museum Fund.....	\$ _____
Publication Fund.....	\$ _____

Tax receipts will be issued

Membership Term January 1st. to December 31st.
Please complete application and make your cheque payable to
The Stoney Creek Historical Society
P.O. Box 66637 Stoney Creek On. L8G 5E6

FUTURE SPEAKERS

No regular meeting in June.

Friday June 11, Historical Society Members Picnic

September 1, Ian-Kerr Wilson - The Steam & Technology Museum

October 6, Bill Yeager - Dr. John Troyer 1790 - Self trained medical man.

Continued from page 3

music, fireworks and of course, the re-enactment of the Battle of Stoney Creek. A Quilt Show of comfortable creations both old and new will take place from August 1 to September 6, in conjunction with the Erland Lee (Museum) Home. We'll welcome Fall with our Apple Festival on September 26, with family fun and apple treats.

Thank you for your continued support of Battlefield House Museum.

NEED A RIDE TO THE MEETING ?

Let your phone contact know that you require a ride to our meeting. They will try to make the necessary arrangements.

HUNTING FOREBEARS:

by Dorothy Reid

HILDRETH/SWAYZE/PATTERSON/MERRITT/GOWLAND:

Neil Clark, P.O. Box 282, Queenston, Ont. L0S 1L0, email <bnclark@gocable.net> or telephone, (905) 262-4369 is seeking descendants and information about ancestors of Hiram Hildreth, born ca 1800 in Binbrook, and his wife Lydia Swayze who were the parents of James Hildreth Sr., who married Elizabeth Patterson. James and Elizabeth were the parents of Samuel Hildreth, who married Angelina Merritt. Fanny Hildreth was a great granddaughter, who married George Gowland.

FORTMAN/NORTON: Neil Clark is also looking for ancestors and descendants of William Fortman (C 5, L 19, Saltfleet in 1895). William was the father of Clara Fortman (1873-1897). Clara married Edmund Norton (1862-1931). Edmund Norton was a blacksmith, when his daughter Hazel Wilhelmena was born in 1892 and his son Villiers Jay Norton was born in 1896.

William Fortman is recorded in "The Farmer's Directory, 1891" on Con. 5, Lot 19 (Tapleystown P.O.)

POTLUCK PICNIC FRIDAY JUNE 11th

Archives
c/o Dorothy Kinsman

The Railway Gauge

by Bob Williamson

Canadian Railways use the Standard Railway Gauge which means that the distance between laid rails is 4 feet 8 1/2 inches. Have you ever wondered why the spacing is this odd number? Why not 4 feet or 5 feet? Why 4 feet 8 1/2 inches? My curiosity got the best of me and at a Train Museum exhibit, I asked that question. The guide told me that our tracks are 4 feet 8 1/2 inches wide because we follow the English Standard System. "Why then," I asked, "are the British rails 4 feet 8 1/2 inches apart?" The railway guide explained that, that was the spacing of the track for the old horse drawn street cars. "Why," I persisted, "were the street car tracks 4 feet 8 1/2 inches wide?" "Well," said the guide, patiently, "that's because the wagon track on the roads were 4 feet 8 1/2 inches wide." Believing that this was turning into a shaggy dog story, I testily demanded to know why the wagon tracks were 4 feet 8 1/2 inches wide. "Oh!" said the guide, beginning to enjoy the game, "that's because the ruts made by the Roman Chariots were 4 feet 8 1/2 inches wide". Completely frustrated, I growled sarcastically, "What Roman horse's ass decided to make the wheel base of a Roman Chariot 4 feet 8 1/2 inches wide?" "Ah," said the guide with a grin and a raised index finger, "now you have the answer. That's the average combined width of the rear ends of two Roman war horses in tandem".