



(Constantine Leimic, Artist, 1976)

Part One 1819 - 1850

John Beatty and the Irish Settlers - 1819



▲ Settlers fording the Credit River
(George A. Reid, Region of Peel Archives
Perkins Bull Collection)



▲ A Settler's First log cabin
(Frederick R. Bercham)

Meadowvale got its start in the summer of 1819, when twenty-six Irish families led by John Beatty and Thomas Graham came up from New York City, in the state of New York, United States of America. It can be said that the newly settled village was originally an Irish colony. Of these settlers, much talent was among them, such as millwrights, artisans, doctors and tradesmen.

Following the War of 1812, the Upper Canada government encouraged immigration. Many American residents, who were still true loyalists to Britain, felt it was time to depart the United States and start a new life where their loyalty was not in question. Being United Empire Loyalists, Beatty, Graham, Joseph Reed and others were subjected to persecution in New York and consequently decided to move to British soil in Upper Canada. Some of these men had purchased land in New York State and they sold it to finance their trip north. The year before setting out, Beatty visited the British Consul to inquire about procuring land in Upper Canada. He was advised to send in a grant application to Lieutenant Governor Sir Peregrine Maitland. The petition of John and James Beatty and Joseph Carter was read in Council by John Beikie, the clerk, on October 20, 1818. It requested that, "a Tract of Land favourably situated be set apart for the reception of them and their associates, to be located on their respective arrival. It being understood that the petitioners and their associates avail themselves of this order by actual location before the first of August next." Three days later, Surveyor General Thomas Rideout reported to Lieutenant Governor Maitland that he had "set apart a tract of land of 5,000 acres (2,020 ha) for the reception of about 150 families... in the rear of Toronto Township."

These families, 54 adults and 33 children, began their pilgrimage on May 1, 1819, in a caravan of 26 wagons. Each family's wagon, drawn by sturdy horses or oxen, was stocked with the necessary provisions for the long journey into the wilderness of a new and formidable land. The wagon train could cover approximately thirty miles (50 k) a day. They crossed the Niagara River by ferry and while they camped there, John and David Beatty and Thomas Graham, who were the advance agents for the Irish settlers, made several trips into York to negotiate for land grants as the government had promised. Upon

settling this, the wagon train ventured towards York. They stopped in Hamilton on a Saturday night and stayed at an Inn operated by Caleb Hopkins. He talked them into staying over the Sabbath and they took his advise and joined in the Sunday prayer meeting. Hopkins was later elected a Member of Parliament and said to be, “the only Innkeeper, who ever occupied that position in Canada.”

The journey was tedious, a slow process, with treacherous terrain and waterways to traverse. When they had to make a river crossing, sometimes it was necessary for all the men to assist each wagon individually. They reached York on May 28th, where they stayed for a time, waiting approval of their grants. Each head of the household then had to select his 200 (81 ha) or 100 acre (40 ha) land grant by drawing “location tickets” out of a box. With their land grants secure, the caravan negotiated the rutted trail called Dundas Street. Beatty and the families held a service at the Mimico Creek. Following the prayer meeting, they continued until they came to the Credit River, the area that would become the little village of Toronto (later Springfield then Erindale) in 1822. Here, they separated into two groups, one went towards the Township Line (Winston Churchill Boulevard) and four miles (6.4 k) later settled there, which became known as Switzer’s Corners for one of the original Irish families. The other, led by Beatty, started heading north towards their destination, which was fertile land where meadows and valleys abounded with virgin pine forests. Part way up the river, John Beatty’s wagon broke down and they had to transfer his belongings onto a makeshift raft to travel the rest of the way. Thomas and George Graham and his group, which included their brothers and Joseph Carter, went a little further east and settled at what would become Derry West.

Beatty’s property was 400 acres (162 ha) of Lots 11 and 12, Con.3, WHS. The paperwork from the British government took some time to be finalized and the settlers did not see their deeds for several years, therefore John Beatty’s property was recorded on July 23, 1821.

John and his wife, Sarah Sproule, and their three sons, John, James and Joseph, and John’s brother David, settled in to build a cabin and work the land. A statement once made is so true, “Those early pioneers went to work with strong arms and stout hearts and overcame the difficulties that would appear insurmountable in our day.”

When their cabin was completed, John Beatty had to go into York with a witness to sign a certificate of oath for settlement duties estab-

lished by the government that had four stipulations: that there was a dwelling on his property, that five acres (2 ha) of land was cleared and fenced, that the roadway was cleared in front of his homestead and a certificate of completion be witnessed. If a certificate was not filed within 18 months, the land could be forfeited.

David helped John clear the land and plant the crops. It has been said of John that he started the first mill in the area and he probably was the one who gave the village its name. In 1832, David received a grant of Lot 13, Con. 3, WHS, which he sold to James Crawford in 1841.

Pioneer life was difficult, hardships ensued. Many did not prevail, but sold out and left for the more populated areas like York and Hamilton. Only the tenacious remained and persevered.

The Beatty homestead, which eventually faced a dirt trail that would become Derry Road West, became the focal point of the settlement. John was fondly called “Squire Beatty.” He and Sarah had two daughters, Margaret and Mary, born here. His brother, James, who had not made the trip because he was delayed in New York on business, arrived the following year with his wife and three children. He had received Lot 13, Con. 1, 200 acres (81 ha) in 1819, which he sold in 1823. It has been recorded that James owned part of Dundas Street and operated the toll gates for which he received great profit for this endeavour. A *Globe and Mail* article reads, “In 1835, the Legislature made a grant toward the graveling of Dundas Street and the highway was established as a toll-pike as far as Springfield (later Erindale). The road was the property of James Beatty and once a week, he drove along the road to collect tolls from his keepers. Payment was, of course, entirely in silver, and when he reached York he had so much money that he sometimes needed assistance to lift the bag from the wagon.”

John Beatty, who had been born in the County of Tyrone, Ireland, in 1782, was a Temporal leader and pivotal spiritual person. His home was used for the Wesleyan Methodist services. The first gathering was in 1821 when over 100 people attended. He was a great friend of Reverend Egerton Ryerson, who was ordained in 1825 and founded the education system in 1844. John’s oath of allegiance was, “No matter where I am, no matter where I live, I will serve Him.” In 1825, he built a more substantial homestead for his family.

As time passed, John became more involved with his Wesleyan interests and drifted away from farming. He was quite a land speculator

though and purchased over 2,000 acres (809 ha) in Toronto Township, Caledon, Toronto Gore and Chinguacousy. He bought the Andrew Scott grant Lot 15, Con 3, WHS, of 100 acres (40 ha) in 1822, which he sold to Thomas Stoyell of Toronto in 1831 and he also received Lot 12, Con. 3, WHS, as a grant in 1831. He was then described as “a gentleman of good property.”

Beatty became a circuit rider in 1827, a volunteer job that took him away for two weeks out of every month, spent in the Home District circuit. He was ordained into the Methodist ministry in 1830 and was then appointed to the Bay of Quinte District. Being associated with Reverend Ryerson, he became involved in securing a university for the Methodists in 1831. He was then appointed to select a location for Upper Canada Academy by the Canada Conference of the Wesleyan Church. He inaugurated a campaign for funds for the first non-Anglican College in the Empire that same year. The following year, he left the tiny community of Meadowvale to become a Steward. The corner stone was laid June 9, 1832, in Cobourg and the Academy opened in 1836. (It became Victoria University in 1841, and was moved to Toronto in

1892, because of money left to the University in the will of William Gooderham Jr.) Beatty took on the position of Governor of the Academy in 1836 until he retired in 1842. He continued to reside in

Cobourg and promoted the advancement of the Methodist Church until his death on June 30, 1864, at age 82. His second wife, Rebecca, lived until age 105 when she passed away in September, 1887. His son, Dr. John Beatty (1810-1898), practiced medicine in Cobourg, was a professor of chemistry at Victoria University, a member of Town Council and Mayor for the years, 1858-1860, 1866-1867 and held many other prestigious positions.

Beatty sold 75 acres (30 ha) of Lot 11 in 1833 and the east half of Lot 12 in 1841 to James Crawford, and the west half of Lot 12 to William Leslie in 1843. His Lot 11 acreage and the 200 acre (81 ha) 1824 grant of Evan Richards, Lot 10, Con 3, form the Village of Meadowvale. His second house, the oldest in the Village, located at 1125 Willow Lane, is still in existence and is owned by artist Goran Skalin.



▲ Dr. John Beatty
(Region of Peel Archives,
Perkin's Bull Collection)



▲ Victoria University, Cobourg
(Waterfront Regeneration Trust)



▲ The Beatty/Skalin House
(James Holmes)

The Steens - 1819

William Steen's two sons, Nathaniel (1799-1867) and Ephraim (1801-1876) were among the settlers from New York who arrived here in 1819 and they settled in to work with their neighbours. In 1822, William Steen (1774) came to Canada with his wife, Rebecca Weylie (1774-1867), whom he had married in Linmore, Ireland, in 1795, another son, William, 1814, and daughters, Mary, 1798, Nancy, 1805, Jane, 1808, Rebecca, 1810, Ann, 1812, Isabelle, 1813, Matilda, 1816, and Sarah, 1819.



(Ministry of Transportation)

ON SEPTEMBER 8, 1827, WILLIAM PURCHASED INDIAN Joseph Bandt Clinch's 200 acre (81 ha) grant, Lot 7, Con. 3, WHS, for £200 (\$500). The property was located on the east side of Second Line West on the banks of a small stream that fed into the Credit River. Clinch had received the acreage in 1823 and had cleared one acre (0.4 ha). Indian corn was growing in the clearing where he had constructed a log shanty, in which the family took up occupancy. The Credit River was only a narrow waterway but it had an abundance of fish, including salmon. When the boys went fishing, they would poke the water with a pitch fork and bring up a big salmon, which was then cooked to perfection and much enjoyed.

The Steen name is of Dutch origin, which is spelled Steyne in Dutch. There was a renowned Dutch painter named Jan Steen, a relative of Rembrandt, who was born at Leydon in 1636. Their ancestors were persecuted in Holland during the Duke of Alva's reign (1567-1573), so they went to Ayrshire, Scotland, where things were not much better and then to Ireland during England's King James I's reign (1567-1625). They settled in Culmore, Donegal County, around 1620.

William and his sons built another log house that lasted for a number of years. Most of their children were quite mature so they helped farm the land and carried out the numerous chores. A bridge was put across the Credit River and a road was put in to the Third Line (now Creditview Road), which was used to get to Streetsville.

A year after their arrival, daughter, Mary, married John Brown, in her parents' home. He had come from Ireland with them. This was probably the first wedding in Meadowvale. Mary and John moved to York County where they would have 13 children. In 1829, Jane married Jacob McCracken, who had also come over with the Steen family. They had six children. As each of his daughters married, William Steen gave the couple £200 (\$500). In 1844, William built a large house of solid stone with the date carved in a cornerstone. This house was used for several generations of Steens.

Son, Nathaniel, married Isabella McKenzie (1800-1893) in 1829 and William built them a log house on the west side of the stream close to his home. They had five children, Rebecca, William, Nathaniel (Big Nat), Mary and Ephraim.

In 1830, William's son Ephraim married Jane Douglas. William sold Nathaniel and Ephraim 66 acres (26.9 ha) each for £100 (\$250) on January 13, 1832. Ephraim and Jane lived in a log house on the east side of the stream. They had seven children, four boys and three girls. He built a house in 1846 from bricks that came from the James Forster farm just north of Britannia Road West, Lot 5, Con. 2. The bricks were sun-dried. When the cellar was dug, the sand and gravel excavation was used in the construction of the house. The bricks were covered with stucco. When they moved to Streetsville in 1871, their son, Nathaniel (White Nat, 1845-1913) took up residency here with his new wife, Sarah Ann Danby (1847-1911), whom he had married that year and they had five children.

Big Nat bought the farm of Thomas O'Shaughnessy 150 acres (61 ha) of Lots 7 and 8, Con. 2, WHS, in 1888 for \$13,400 and worked it for a number of years until he moved his family to Streetsville. The next generation to take over White Nat's farm were sons Ernest (1887-1921) and Wilfred (1893-1965). Ernie married and moved to a farm on First Line (McLaughlin Road) and Wilfred remained on his father's farm. He married Jean Johnson, who was a Meadowvale Public School teacher. They had a daughter, Eleanor, and two sons, Stanley and Robert. Wilfred sold 50 acres (20 ha) of Lot 8, Con. 2, to his brother, James Danby Steen (1873-1965), in 1921. When Highway 401 was under construction in 1953/55, part of the Nathaniel Steen farm was sold. Wilfred built a two storey house on the southern portion of the farm, 5545 Creditview Road, where he resided until his death in 1965. Part of Lot 7 and the rest of Lot 8 acreage had been sold in 1960 to Constantine Chreston. Jean sold the remainder of the farm to Alexander Gunn on February 8, 1968, and moved to an apartment in Streetsville.

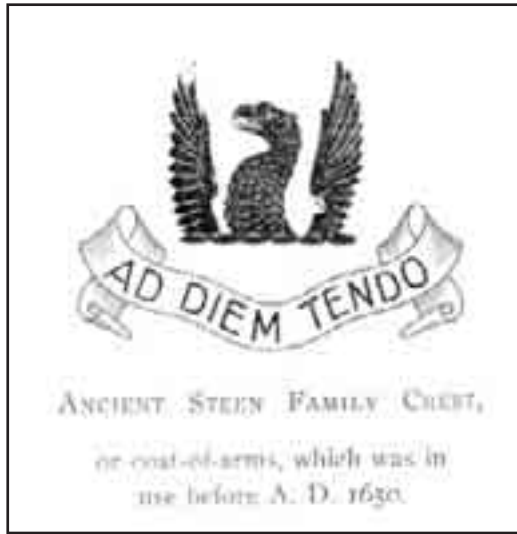
Upon progenitor William's death and burial in St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church Cemetery in Streetsville, the original section of the family farm, the east half 100 acres (40 ha) of Lot 7, Con. 3, was passed on to Nathaniel. When he died in 1867 (buried in the Streetsville Town Cemetery), he willed it to his son Nathaniel (Big Nat, 1841-1930), who was married to Marjery Jean Cumming (1840-1922). Then Nathaniel passed it on to James D. Steen in October, 1905, and moved to Streetsville. J.D. married Ada Amelia Oliver (b.1873), in 1901 and they had two daughters, Ethel (1904-1978, who married Toyne Grice and had Glenn and Joan), and Bessie



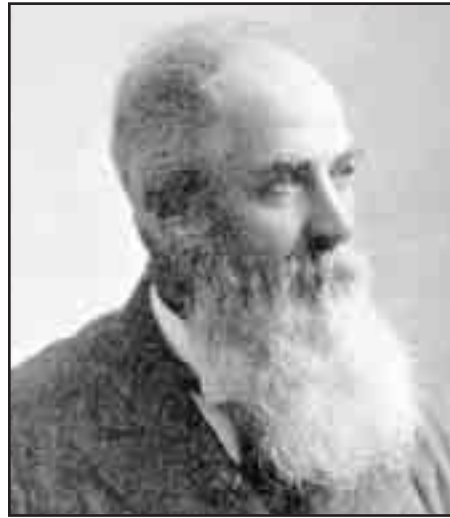
▲ Wilfred Steen's House (Demolished in 1983)
(City of Mississauga Heritage Department)



▲ Robert Steen's House (Demolished 1982)
(City of Mississauga Heritage Department)



▲ Steen Family Crest
(Grant Clarkson)



▲ Nathaniel Steen, 1799-1867
(Grant Clarkson)



▲ Sarah Steen Irwin
(b.1819, married John Irwin,
1839, d.1907)
(Grant Clarkson)



▲ Mrs. William Steen
(Region of Peel Archives)



▲ Mr. & Mrs. J. D. Steen
(Region of Peel Archives)



▲ J. D. Steen House
(Region of Peel Archives)

(1910-1985). Ada died in 1921, and on June 9, 1927, he married Katie Dracass (d.1974) of Streetsville. By 1956, J.D. could no longer manage his 150 acre (61 ha) farm, so he rented it to his nephew, Keith Christie (b.1923).

Keith had talked his uncle into purchasing Holstein-Friesian cows and it was a successful venture. When Keith married Florence Laidlaw (1922-2002), a Norval farm girl, in 1947, she gave her groom two Holsteins, teasing him that this was her dowry. Keith ended up with 45 cows which produced 5,200 pounds (2,358 litres) of milk per day.

Keith's father, Peter Christie (1884-1984), was a pharmacist in Toronto and then Martyn's Drug Store in Streetsville from 1951 to 1970. He and his wife, Jessie Dracass (1883-1961), lived on Keith's farm, where Jessie died September 17, 1961. Keith became president of the Peel County Branch of Holstein-Friesian Association and director of the Peel Agricultural Society. Florence, taught 10 units of the Girls 4-H Homemaking Club in Meadowvale. She was also a Women's Institute member. The entire family worked at the farm chores and took quite an interest in their livelihood. Their daughter, Carol (b.1948), graduated from Guelph University in Household Sciences. She now lives in Port Credit and is a teacher at Cawthra Park Secondary School and mother to Ashley, 1984, and Christina, 1986. Their son, Peter, 1950, was leader of the Brampton 4-H Calf

Club. He graduated from the Ontario Agricultural College in Guelph. Today, he operates his own farm in Terra Cotta. Son, Ken, 1954, was a Streetsville Secondary Student, who became a veterinarian. He now works for Gencor in Guelph as a reproduction specialist.

In the 1950s, the Christie family had one of the biggest dairy farms in South Peel with one of the largest milk shipments throughout Ontario. Keith bought J.D. Steen's farm five years before J.D. died in January, 1965. As the advent of industrialism permeated Mississauga in the 1970s, dairy farmers began to pull back on their activities and the dairy industry declined.

In 1975, the former Wilfred Steen farm was featured on a CBC-TV one hour drama called "People Problems." It dealt with a farmer's land being expropriated. It was aired on March 14, 1976.

On August 7, 1980, Keith Christie sold the original Steen farm to Ivan Bahoric. In 1981, Fitzwood Investments took it over. He and Florence remained on the property until 1984. His father died in September, 1984, at 100 years old. Then they moved to their 200 acre (81 ha) farm in Terra Cotta. Here, father and son, continue in the field they know best. Shortly after they moved, the Steen house and barn burned down mysteriously. A subdivision now occupies part of the acreage. Keith lost his wife, Florence, on March 4, 2002.

The Steen family are remembered with Steen Drive and Steen Park.



▲ Steen Farm
(Carol Christie Peckett)



▲ Christie Farm
(Carol Christie Peckett)



▲ Carol, Florence, Peter, Keith and Ken, 1961



▲ Carol, Peter and J. D. Steen, 1952



▲ Keith Christie, 1957



◀ Holstein Cows

Keith Christie, 1960 ▶



Photos courtesy of Carol Christie Peckett

MEMORIES

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"All the Steens were staunch Presbyterians and every Wednesday night my grandparents (Ephraim and Jane) would walk down to Prayer Meeting in the Presbyterian Church in Streetsville. In those days, when the parents left home, the cupboards and the cellar doors were locked. But my father and Joseph Fulton, who was brought up in the house, devised a scheme of getting the apples out of the cellar. They cut a hole about three inches square in the floor of the dining room. They very carefully replaced the piece of wood and covered it with a rug. In the daytime, when in the cellar, they placed the apple barrel immediately below this hole. When the parents were away at Prayer Meeting, they used a stick with a nail on the end of it to spear the apples and bring them up through the square hole in the floor. Grandmother used to wonder what caused all the marks and holes in the apples in the barrel."

*Written by Matilda (b. 1883), only daughter of Nathaniel (White Nat) Steen
From the Meadowvale Women's Institute Scrapbooks*

"My mother, Alice, was an Irwin and on the other side of the family were the Steens. So my mother was a first cousin of J. D. Steen of Meadowvale. There is quite a story about how many Jim Steens there were in the area. It became complicated after awhile. There were two Jim Steens to start with. They designated one man Second Line Jim Steen and the other Third Line Jim Steen. Then it got more complicated when another Jim Steen moved to the Second Line - they were all interrelated. So the original one was called Second Line Jim Steen Red and the other Second Line Jim Steen Black. They were a prolific family."

Grant Clarkson Former Councillor of Toronto Township and former Chairman of the Credit Valley Conservation Authority

The McClures - 1819

James McClure (b.1775, d.1849) came to Meadowvale with Beatty's Irish families in 1819. James was married to his second cousin, Catherine McClure, and they had David, 1801, Hannah, Mary, John, James and Jane, 1817, by the time they took the six week ocean voyage to the continent of North America. His brother, Thomas (1763-1827) and family accompanied them.

The first generation of McClures was James McClure born in Scotland in 1690. He married and immigrated to Antrim, Ireland, in 1715, where he died. He had four sons, James, Thomas, Abraham and Andrew (b.1726, married and had Elizabeth, Abraham, Andrew, Thomas, James 1775 and Jane).

No grant could be found for the McClures, but James did purchase the east half of Beatty's grant Lot 12, Con. 4, WHS, for £62 (\$155) on February 1, 1830. A dense wilderness faced him and he had to clear his land and construct the necessary buildings to make it livable. He built a substantial house to accommodate his family and frame structures were put in place. Mary McClure purchased 100 acres (40 ha) E 1/2 of Lot 13, Con. 4, in 1832 and sold it to brother James in 1861.



WHEN JAMES DIED IN 1849, HE WAS BURIED IN THE Churchville Cemetery. His son, James, who had been born in Ireland in 1815, inherited the farm. He married Ester McClure. They had James, Samuel, Mary Jane, Ester, Catherine and Sarah, who would become Mrs. Sigsworth S. Reeve. He built a two storey red brick house in 1857 with

bricks transported from Milton. A carpenter was hired to make the doors and window frames. He passed away in 1902 and the farm went to his son, Samuel. The first telephone installed in the McClure home had a six party line.

On the 100th anniversary of the settlement of the McClures in 1819, it was decided to hold a celebration for the farm's century of success. However, it took three years to organize. So in 1922, the first McClure Reunion was held on June 15th, on the McClure farm known as "Lower Jimmie's." This special event was organized by William McClure. A board was installed with William as president, Darius McClure, vice president, David, second vice president, Andrew, third vice, Samuel J., secretary and David J., as treasurer.

Over 500 people, family and friends, congregated from far and near to reminisce, to exchange memories, to share the joy of what their progenitor, James McClure, had initiated by leaving Ireland and bringing his family to reside in Meadowvale.



▲ McClure House, 1857 (Region of Peel Archives)



▲ *The Sutton/Prosser House*
 (City of Mississauga Community Services)

The dinner and supper of the day was catered and the Brampton Brass Band and the Toronto Highland Band supplied music throughout the auspicious occasion. An orchestra was used for dancing in the evening. The entire event cost \$700.

Another successful reunion was held in 1938.

On November 19,

1924, Samuel sold his farm to Walter Sutton of Toronto for \$13,000. Mr. Sutton upgraded the homestead with hydro and plumbing and in the 1930s painted the house white, which was fashionable at this time. Lester and Lefa Prosser bought the farm on July 23, 1947, and called it "L & L Farms." In 1957, they sold out to Meadowvale Development Limited, but were allowed to reside on the farm until the company's properties were purchased by Markborough Properties in 1969 for their subdivisions. Markborough used the McClure house as its office when they started development.

When the 407 ETR Highway was under construction in 1995/97, the Canadian Highways International Constructors moved the 2,400 square foot (230 m²) brick house of James McClure Jr. north to the Village of Churchville, which was designated a heritage district in 1991. It was sand blasted to bring the red brick back to its natural state and restored. It is now used as a residence by Nicola and Tony Perry.

NEWS ITEM

The thrill of discovering gas was experienced by S.S. Rice of Streetsville, whilst employed digging a well on the farm of W.T. Sutton on Lot 12, Third Line West, better known as the Sam McClure Farm

The first indication was given at a depth of 140 feet (42 m); at 160 feet (49 m) Mr. Rice came across a strong flow, which caused him to quit. When lighted, a flame rose about 4 feet (1.2 m) in height and burned for almost an hour.

Still boring another 20 feet (6 m), Mr. Rice struck a strong flow, sufficient, in his estimation, to light a small town.

When the second gush was struck, Mr. Sutton, the owner of the farm, was out-of-doors and thought the noise of the rushing gases was made by the cattle on the farm. Other wells on the farm are reported to be rich in traces of gas.

The boring was made through blue medina, in which was found a layer of limestone, no gravel being found during the process.

The Evening Telegram, August 26, 1928

From the Meadowvale Women's Institute Scrapbooks

LESTER A. PROSSER

Pilot, Farmer, Mining Magnate Popular Meadowvale Resident

One of the most colorful still-ness of the Meadowvale district died as a result of a car accident near Princeton, B.C., last week. Lester A. Prosser, who was a well-instructed pilot, farmer and mining magnate, was 57 at the time of his death.

Mr. Prosser was born in Dawson, N.B., and he enlisted in the Canadian Expeditionary Force of World War One at the age of 17. Though his age was discovered he still managed to stay in the army for the duration of the war.

Following his return from Europe he moved to Albany, New York, where he operated a garage, and married his first wife, the former Ida Ross. Flying was Mr. Prosser's goal in life, and in 1928 he built his own airplane and taught himself how to fly. When he felt sufficiently experienced he purchased a 1918 Plikker Monoplane and began a series of endurance flights that soon gained him wide reputation as a flyer.

The next move was to California, and from there to Alaska, where he operated his own fleet of cargo planes. Tiring of this life, Mr. Prosser returned to Canada in 1941 and began gold mining in British Columbia. Shortly after this he purchased a farm in the Meadowvale area, where he spent part of his leisure time with his daughter and brother-in-law Charles Elliot.

His body was flown here from British Columbia last week for interment at Sanctuary Park cemetery, Weston.

He is survived by his second wife, the former Lefa Jarvis, and one daughter "Oris, by his first marriage to the late Ida Ross; two brothers, Joseph of Sussex, N.B., and William of Naugatuck, Conn., and one sister Jessie, also of Naugatuck.

Funeral services were conducted from the David A. McClure Funeral Home, Rev. White conducted the service. Pallbearers were Charles Elliot, Mr. Jarvis, Mr. Lindbeck, Mr. Barrett, Mr. Lippert and Mr. Sheehy.

Oct. 14, 1958



▲ The McClure Farm
(W.T. Sutton, Region of Peel Archives)



James McClure
House, 2003 ▶
(Kathleen A. Hicks)

McClure Reunion 1938



First Church Services - 1821

THE WESLEYAN METHODIST CHURCH GOT ITS start thanks to John Beatty, who began holding services in his home in 1821. At the first gathering, over 100 people attended coming from miles around. The service would consist of Bible readings, hymn singing, a sermon and discussion.

Circuit Riders came through Meadowvale on occasion and preached. When St. Peter's Anglican Church opened in 1827 in Springfield (Erindale), with Reverend James Magrath as pastor, people from all over Toronto Township, who wanted to get married went to him. He would travel around the Township once every two years to administer baptismal rites to infants.

An early hymn sung by the Methodist congregation was, "Help us to help each other. Lord, each other's burdens bear. Let each his friendly aid afford and feel his brother's care."

Over the years, much camaraderie and community spirit brought a fellowship to the Village of Meadowvale. New people moved here and joined in the services. When the Crawfords moved into the Village in 1833, they also opened up their home to church services.

Other residents, who were not Methodists, such as the McClures, McCracken and Steen families, who were Presbyterians, went to Streetsville to attend church. Others went to Churchville and Malton, depending on their denomination. Therefore, Meadowvale never established a cemetery.

The first Methodist Camp Meeting took place in June, 1842, on Simpsons' property, with 500 people camping in tents and wooden shanties thrown together from remnants from the saw mills for the occasion.

When Francis Silverthorn took over Crawford's house in 1847, the services were conducted at his homestead until the school house was constructed in 1851. It was then utilized on Sundays until a Methodist Church was built in 1863.

A Village Tale

Meadowvale was a Methodist community and some worshipers were known to be overly enthusiastic to the point of their neighbours thinking them demented. One such lady was so overly moved she was thought to be a witch. It was said that her cow produced great quantities of milk and this was thought rather odd. The woman must have put a spell on the cow for it to produce in such abundance. As it turned out, it was discovered that the cow had been eating the rejected bran outside of the mill. This nutritious substance had produced the phenomenon.

Taken from the Meadowvale Women's Institute Scrapbooks



◀ **Circuit Rider**
(C. W. Jefferys Estate Archives - C96392 Rogers Cantel Collection)

Charles William Jefferys (b.1869, d.1951) did many drawings for William Perkins Bull during the writing of his books in the 1930s. Here is one of his quotes about the

project, "Here are portraits of pioneer women who made their homes in the virgin wilderness; of men who hewn fields out of the forests. We see axe-men at work, the planning of a crop amidst a multitude of stumps, the barn raisings, the stone, rail and stump fences, the log cabins, and all the dogged labour with crude tools by which our fathers conquered this land."

Jacob McCracken - 1822

Jacob McCracken came to Meadowvale in 1822 with William Steen and his family. The McCrackens and Steens met while sailing to Upper Canada from County Antrim, Ireland, where Jacob had been born September 21, 1798. Jacob became the beau of William's 17 year old daughter, Jane. They were married in the Steen home, Lot 7, Con. 3, WHS, on May 10, 1829. They would have seven children, Rebecca (1832-1916), Thomas (1834-1930), William (1837-1926), Jacob Jr. (1840-1910), James, (1841-1932), Jane (1843-1862), and John, who died in infancy.



▲ James McCracken
87 years, oldest man at
the Cooksville Fair, 1928
(Region of Peel Archives)

On April 5, 1842, Jacob purchased 100 acres (40 ha) of Lot 9, Con. 3, WHS, south of Meadowvale Village from Kings College and built a two bedroom log house on the east bank of the Credit River. He chinked between the logs with mud. This type of house was so snug, it would be cool in summer and easy to keep warm in winter. It had a fireplace that could handle six foot (1.8 m) logs, which would burn all night and keep its occupants warm and cozy during the long, cold winter nights.

DURING THE FIRST SPRING WHEN THE CREDIT RIVER overflowed, the water would come right up to lap at the small veranda. Jacob built a log milk house adjacent to his homestead. This type of structure was imperative in order to keep milk, eggs, butter and meat cool and fresh. He constructed a bridge over the Credit River in order to connect his laneway with the Third Line (Creditview Road). He commenced farming and soon had a thriving garden.

In 1850, Jacob built a seven room, one and a half storey house alongside the Credit River. It was acclaimed to be the best house in the Village fronted with a lovely veranda. (It was torn down in 1922.) When son William married Mary Jane Leslie (1851-1936), the daughter of John Leslie, their four children, Weylie, William, Ella and Victoria, were all born in his father's log house.

Jacob, who died in 1880, and Jane in 1876, are buried in St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church Cemetery in Streetsville. Son, William, took over his parents' big house. He sold 68 acres (27 ha) of Lot 9 on May 16, 1922, to Goldwin Smith of Toronto - 30 acres (12 ha) of this was bushland. This became part of Smith's Sanford Farm at 1200 Derry Road West, which is still in existence today.



▲ Jacob McCracken's House



▲ McCracken Family, Ella, Weylie, William, a cousin, Victoria, Mr. & Mrs. William McCracken, 1910



▲ McCracken Horses

▲ McCracken Farm



▲ Russell, Margaret, James and Little Hunter, 1929



▲ Jemima McCracken



▲ McCracken House and Barn

Photos courtesy of the Region of Peel Archives

Jacob Jr. bought the east half of Lot 11, Con. 4, WHS, 100 acres (40 ha) of the Anthony Birdsall grant on February 1, 1883, for \$6,530 and farmed the acreage until 1901 when he sold it to brother, William, for \$5,000. Jacob died in 1910. William had a two storey, red brick Victorian mansion constructed by W.B. McCulloch of Brampton for \$2,800. He died in 1926 and Jacob W. resided there. Jacob W. sold the house to Harry T. Sutton on July 23, 1948, for \$15,000. When Sutton died Walter Sutton took up residency. In 1956, 49 acres (19.6 ha) was bought by Vivian Miller, who sold to Meadowvale Development Limited the same year.

William and Mary's son, William, bought Lot 6, Con. 3, WHS, in 1914 from Edwin Walker, who had built a lovely brick house on it in 1911. He married Mary Thomson in 1915 and they owned this house until 1956, when he sold the farm to Trafton Development for a subdivision.

In 1971, only two McCracken grandchildren were living, Gus McCauley, 97, and William McCracken, 85. William was in possession of the family Bible and a tall grandfather clock that Jacob had brought over from Ireland.

MEMORIES



▲ Mrs. J.R. McCracken

"There was also a log milk house adjacent to his house (Jacob McCracken's). These log houses were well chinked and banked with earth to provide coolness in summer and warmth in winter. Milk houses were a necessity to the early pioneer, his wife and family. The milk was set out in a wide shallow pan to allow the cream to rise to the top.

"At a certain stage, the cream was skimmed off and when sufficiently ready, it was hand churned. Butter was packed in crocks for winter use. Meat, largely thick fat pork, was well salted and cured for year round use.

"The pioneer with his heavy out-door labour of clearing the land, tilling and reaping with hand made implements and tools, required much meat for his physical needs. The McCracken family, when sitting out-doors on a summer evening, often heard the rattle of the stagecoach on its run from Port Credit to Snelgrove (then called Edmonton)."

Written by Mrs. J.R. McCracken, Brampton - 1975
From the Meadowvale Women's Institute Scrapbooks

William Elliott & Son- 1829

WILLIAM ELLIOTT AND HIS NEW WIFE, Frances Hamilton, both age 23, came to the area that was referred to as Meadowvale in 1829 from the County of Fermanagh, Ireland, where they had been born. They were married on November 29th in York.

On December 7th, William purchased 100 acres (40 ha) W 1/2 of Lot 13, Con. 2, WHS, for £55 (\$138) from grantee, James McCaque, and settled in McCaque's small log house. In these early days of settlement, Mrs. Elliott was known to bar the doors and windows to keep out the wolves and bears in the area. The Elliotts eventually had four children, William, born April 21, 1837, would become Reeve of Toronto Township, two daughters, Jane and Margaret, and a son, John, who became a doctor and practised in Fort Erie.

Elliott farmed his acreage quite successfully and his produce was sent throughout Ontario. After living in a primitive cottage for many years, William built a substantial one and a half storey red brick house in 1840 that sat upon a rubble stone foundation. It was styled after Ontario Regency and Classical Revival vernacular architecture and fronted by a Regency style veranda with an open trellised effect that was topped by a bell-cast roof.



▲ The Elliott Residence
(Historical Atlas of Peel)



▲ William Elliott II
(Historical Atlas of Peel)

In 1848, he bought the west half of Lot 14, Con. 2, WHS, 100 acres (40 ha) for £400 (\$1,000) from John Beatty for expansion. He died in December, 1859, and was buried in the Churchville Cemetery where Frances joined him in 1870.

Upon his father's death, William Jr. inherited his father's holdings, with the stipulation that he make dowry payments to his sisters and take care of his mother. In 1863, young William married Ann Jane Jackson, the eldest daughter of John Jackson from Trafalgar Township, Halton County. They had three children, Maria, 1865, Jane, 1869, and John William, 1871. He was elected a member of Toronto Township Council in 1865. He became Deputy Reeve in 1868 along with Port Credit resident,

Robert Cotton. In 1871, he became Reeve, which he lost to Cotton the following year. The year he was Reeve, his brother John passed away at Fort Erie. On February 10, 1873, William bought Lot 14, Con. 3, WHS, from his brother in law James Bussell for \$1,000, bringing his farm, located on the Second Line West, to 300 acres (121 ha). In July, 1875, he purchased his sisters Jane Beatty and Margaret Bussell's shares in the family farm for \$2,600.

In 1874, he purchased Jonathan Robinson's store and operated it as a wholesale and retail grocery and liquor store. He sold crockery, boots, shoes and various sundries. His trade extended into Halton County to the west. When Elliott's store was owned by William Campbell, it was destroyed by fire under mysterious circumstances around 1887. It was not replaced.

William ran as a Conservative candidate in the Provincial election in 1874, but was defeated by 14 votes. He ran again in 1878 and won over Liberal's Robert Smith and held the position of Member of Parliament for five years. He then was appointed Immigration Officer and also served as a magistrate. He was also a director of the Peel County Agricultural Society. He lost his wife Ann in 1880, the same year he declared bankruptcy. He remarried in 1884 and moved to Toronto. He died March 2, 1888, at the home of his sister, Margaret, in Trafalgar Township and was buried in the Churchville Cemetery. Because of his political affiliation, he had one of the largest funerals Toronto Township had ever experienced.

The Elliott farm was sold to Arthur Godson in 1884 for \$6,800 and in 1888 to Richard MacKay and his bride, Louise Dennison, for \$6,250. They sold to Mary Steen in 1902, who for \$1 gave it "with love and affection" to Nathaniel Robert Steen. On October 6, 1909, Lorne Davidson purchased the farm for \$6,300. He and his wife, Frances, had two children, Mary and Ian. He restored the Elliott house to its original splendour.



▲ William Elliott's Store
(Historical Atlas, 1877)



▲ Elliott Gravestone

When he died in 1945, his son, Ian, inherited the farm, which he operated with the same fervor as his father before him. In December, 1976, 40 acres (16 ha) of Ian's farm was bought by the Ontario government for the Parkway Belt West, acquired for future transportation routing. When the 407 ETR Highway was destined to be put through in 1995/97, right where his house was located, he sold out and moved to Georgetown. Ian died in 2003.

The house at 7497 Second Line West was moved north of the 407, by the highway builders, Canadian Highways International Constructors, where it has become part of a heritage district in the old village of Churchville. The City of Brampton had designated the Elliott/Davidson house under By-law No. 7-82 on January 11, 1982. The one and a half storey red brick house, which is a combination of Ontario Regency and classical Revival vernacular architecture, is located at 7558 Creditview Road and the new owners are Dian Landurie and Walter de Bruyn Kops. William Elliott II is remembered in a roadway called Elliott Parliament in the Monarch subdivision, east of Meadowvale Village.

MEMORIES

Joe Preston was William Elliott's coachman and Jack Ward was working on the farm with him. Mr. Elliott owned a Spanish-jack and one day before he went out he gave them instructions not to take the Spanish-jack out of the box stall. But the boys thought they would hitch it up with a blood mare they had and drive up the ice to Churchville. They hitched them up to an old sleigh and put on an old crockery crate (a harness made of boughs from trees) and drove up the ice to Churchville. They managed very well on the way up, but on the way home the jack started to run away and the mare ran just as fast as the jack. The boys were afraid the horses would jump the dam at Meadowvale and probably kill them both as well as themselves. While they were running at full speed, the boys became conscious stricken and promised that if both weren't killed, whoever was killed, the other wouldn't tell. The horses, however, when they saw the dam, stopped on their own accord and the incident ended well.

From an interview with Lorne Davidson by William Perkins Bull while he was researching for his series of history books - 1933

James Crawford - 1833

James and Eliza Crawford from Hamilton, Gore District, bought 75 acres (30 ha) of John Beatty's grant, Lot 11, Con. 3, WHS, on October 16, 1833, for £400 (\$1,000). At this time, the area called Meadowvale was almost a trackless forest, only rustic log cabins poked out of the wilderness. He and his wife, Eliza, resided in John Beatty's house, while they planted their crops and settled into the village atmosphere. Only one son can be accounted for, James, who was born in 1834.

They were Wesleyan Methodists and held services in their home. Later, James was a trustee of Eden Methodist Church. Then in 1840, he constructed a substantial wooden, storey and a half house for his family on a wagon trail that would become Derry Road, named for the community of Derry West. It was but a narrow track through a dense pine forest and the farmers would put logs in the muck and mire to make the roadway more passable.



▲ Crawford/Silverthorn House
(James Holmes)

CRAWFORD WAS MORE AMBITIOUS THAN JOHN BEATTY where the community's economy was concerned and he set out to establish himself in a more economically encouraging environment by constructing a grist mill. Crawford dammed up the Credit River, putting all his effort into his work. He pressed toward the first steps to the Village becoming a booming centre of industry and commerce in the area. He was prepared to carry out a thriving business and began to promote himself by encouraging his neighbours to bring their wheat to him for grinding when his mill got underway. But unfortunately he could not put the mill into operation because his dam never established sufficient power for satisfactory production to run the mill. Shortly after the mill was constructed, it burned down. He failed and never realized his dream.

Crawford had actually come to the area as early as 1822, when he purchased 100 acres (40 ha) of Lot 13, Con. 4, WHS, on July 6th, for £50 (\$125) from grantee, Ebenezer Austin. He sold 50 acres (20 ha) in 1834 to Hiram Hall for £62 (\$155) and 50 acres to John Beatty in 1835 for £100 (\$250). In 1841, he bought the west half of Lot 12, Con 2, WHS, Alexander Burn's grant, 200 acres (81 ha) for £350 (\$875) and the east half of Lot 12, Con. 3, £500 (\$1,250), part of John Beatty's grant, and Lot 13, Con. 3, E2, 100 acres for £100 (\$250) from grantee David Beatty, which was sold to Andrew Davidson on December 23, 1846, for £225 (\$563).

He sold the rest of his properties to Francis Silverthorn, Aaron Silverthorn and others between 1845 and 1848 and he took his family back to Hamilton. James Crawford Jr's obituary appeared in the *Christian Guardian* April 7, 1852. "Master James Crawford of Hamilton. He was the son of Mr. James and Mrs. Eliza Crawford of this city, formerly of Toronto Township, in which James was born, August, 1834. He was descended from pious parentage on both sides for at least two generations back; and his opportunity of religious instruction and impression were superior to many. He was the grandson of Mother Crawford, whose interesting obituary appears above this."

Their house is now a heritage home, referred to as the Silverthorn house at 7050 Old Mill Lane. In the Monarch development, Gooderham Estates, a house has been named for the family and one street is called Crawford Mill Avenue.

The Brown Family - 1837

The Brown family, Thomas, Jane and their seven children, three sons and four daughters, arrived in Toronto Township in 1824 when Thomas Brown purchased 100 acres (40 ha), the east half of Lot 6, Con. 2, WHS, in the Britannia area, from grantee Elizah Dexter on July 9th for £25 (\$63). Thomas (b.1787, d.1847) and Jane (1793-1876) had resided in New York State since journeying there from Northumberland County, England, in 1816. One of Thomas' experiences was working on the Erie Canal, which started in 1817 and opened in 1825.

He built a log house on Lot 6 that sufficed until 1826, when he constructed a sturdier house of Milton brick. On September 10, 1836, he bought 50 acres (20 ha) of Lot 5, Con. 3, EHS for £150 (\$450). In 1837, he purchased 50 acres from grantee John McIntosh of Lot 10, Con. 1, WHS, to the east of Meadowvale Village. He secured another 106 acres (42.7 ha) of Lot 10 in 1839. In 1840, he allowed the Derry West Presbyterian Church congregation to build their church on Lot 10, and in 1886, his son, Samuel (1819-1899), signed over this piece of his property to the church. He also acquired the east half of Lots 3 and 4, Con. 4, 200 acres (81 ha) in Streetsville in 1845 from Timothy and Erastus Street.

Upon Thomas death in 1847, Lots 3 and 4 were willed to son, George, which remained in the family until 1903. Thomas' other properties went to Samuel, who was generous to his siblings and children. Samuel received the 306 acres (122.7 ha) from his father's estate, which included Lot 10, Con.1. At age 31 years, he became the

owner of the east half of Lot 10, Con. 2, WHS, for £850 (\$2,125) on November 12, 1850, bought from James Grafton. In 1877, brother Joseph became the owner of Lot 6, then it went to Joseph's son, George, in 1890 and in 1906, the original Brown property was sold.

Samuel and his new wife, Mary Ann Johnston, 1820, and their son, William Cyrus, 1849, moved to the Lot 10 property in 1850 to live in



▲ The Samuel Brown House
(Courtesy of Allan Emerson)

a makeshift log home-
stead. He began to
farm in earnest and
bred cows to establish
himself and his family.
He and Mary would
have Lucinda Jane,
1852, John Wesley,
named for Reverend
John Wesley the
founder of Methodism,
1857, Francis
Joseph, 1859, and
Henry, 1862.
As Samuel prospered, he bought the west half of Lot 10, Con. 2, for \$1,500 on November 19, 1862. A Durham bull was calved on the Brown farm on November 10, 1865, and a year and a half later, he weighed in at 1,350 pounds (612 kg). This was recorded in *The Canada Farmer*, Volume IV, 1867. With his family expanding, Samuel built a large two storey red brick house in 1866 that had two chimneys, a side addition and a front veranda.

On June 26, 1886, Cyrus, who had attended Victoria College in Cobourg, was given 50 acres (20 ha), W 1/2, Lot 10, Con. 2, for his farm from Samuel. He and wife, Grace Pegg, had been married on December 22, 1875, by Reverend D. Prossar. Since 1878, Cyrus was noted as a "successful breeder of Cleveland Berg carriage horses," which were a popular breed that looked handsome drawing an elegant

carriage. He purchased his horses in Reading, Pennsylvania, and sold a team of bays to the Marquis of Lorne, John Douglas Campbell, Governor General of Canada (1878-1883). In 1879, he won several gold and silver medals for his horses at the Toronto Industrial Exhibition and also in 1881 and 1882. He became a director of the Toronto Township Fair Board and continued his entries until 1901.

Frank Brown was educated at the Brampton High School and became a silver medalist of the Boston School of Oratory. He established Delsarte School of Oratory in Toronto. He was the author of "Elocution and Voice Culture." He was a popular speaker throughout Canada, giving Shakespearean readings. He became a Professor in the Bowling Green, Kentucky, State Normal School and New Orleans Normal School. During this tenure, he married a Canadian girl named Miriam Williams.

He toured Canada in 1895 and 1896, visiting colleges, high schools, Mechanic Institutes (libraries), Young Men's Christian Associations and churches giving a wide extensive collection of the classics and standard readings from his wide repertoire, which included Shakespearean plays, "Hamlet," "Merchant of Venice," "Julius Caesar," and Sheridan's famous comedy, "The Rivals." He was so well received and successful that return engagements were numerous.

His wife, Miriam, who retained her name Williams, was a great match, as she was an elocutionist. She was a mastery of her subject, skillfully executing her expertise in the dramatic arts. She was also successful as a writer and dramatic impersonator, well known in Toronto and other large Ontario cities. They would often do engagements together, which was referred to in the advertisements as "A Brilliant Combination."

Upon his retirement, Professor Brown returned to his roots in Meadowvale. He and his brother, John Wesley, operated a dairy farm, which turned out quite lucrative. He was very community minded and the founder of the Meadowvale Fortnightly Club in 1910. Being an accomplished debater, his expertise was greatly appreciated by the less knowledgeable.

Daughter, Lucinda, married James Brown (no relation) of Acton and



▲ Francis J. Brown
(Allan Emerson)

they moved to Los Angeles, California. She was a poet and published two books of poetry, which she illustrated: "The Road of the Years and Other Poems" and "Fireside Reveries." She also wrote music and lyrics, one entitled "Yer the Rainbow in me Sky," which was published in 1937.

Wheler Brothers sold Henry Brown the Silverthorn house and mill and 118 acres (47.7 ha) on August 14, 1895, for \$7,800, the year after he ran for councillor. He immediately moved into the old homestead with his wife, Elizabeth Catherine (Lillie) Carberry (1865-1949), the daughter of James and Isabella Carberry. They had three children, Francis, 1894, Grace (1903-1949) and Henry, 1909. The boys died in infancy. Once settled, he began to clean up the place and tore down the stables that had been used for the Commercial Hotel and constructed a new barn. He put in a new foundation for the house and turned it around to face Derry Road. He seeded and fenced the front yard and planted four elm trees that grew magnificently to grace the front entrance until they were killed by the Dutch elm disease in the 1960s. Then he opened a summer resort on the pond so visitors could picnic and enjoy boating and swimming. In the winter they would skate and hold a winter carnival.



▲ Lucinda Brown
(Louise Southern)



▲ Henry Brown Residence
(Allan Emerson)

In 1905, Henry produced electricity with a generator in the mill and ran the power to his house and other buildings. He strung lights up everywhere, making his property very colourful. In 1908, he drained the mill pond and added new head gates which transformed the pond into an eight acre (3.2 ha) lake area that he named, "Willow Lake." (In the late

1960s, the CVCA put the course of the river back to its original path.) Francis Silverthorn had built a one and a half storey structure north of his house and Henry utilized it as a boathouse. Henry was an



▲ Miriam Williams Brown



▲ Luther and Holstein Calf



▲ Henry Brown



▲ Lillie Brown



▲ Luther and Grace Emerson

ELECTORS OF TORONTO TOWNSHIP!
 Ladies and Gentlemen
 Your Vote and Influence are respectfully
 solicited for
 ✦ **HENRY A. BROWN,** ✦
 OF MEADOWVALE,
 AS COUNCILLOR FOR 1894.
 Election, Monday, Jan. 1st.

▲ Election Card

The Carnival
 on Willow Lake Rink
 Meadowvale
 will be the event of the season!

VALUABLE PRIZES WILL BE GIVEN IN THE
 FOLLOWING CLASSES:

Best Lady Skater
 Best Ladies' Group Skater
 Best Skating of Lady's Skating
 Amateur Skating Race
 Professional Skating Race
 Best Skating of Men
 Skating Race of Men

Magazine for Skaters

◀ flyer

**Willow Lake
 SUMMER - RESORT
 Meadowvale**

The beauty spot of Peel is now open for
 the season. A fleet of brand new Boats and
 Canoes with a mile and a quarter stretch of
 boating on lake and river amid scenery that is
 unexcelled, adds to the charms of this lovely
 spot. The finest of grounds for baseball, foot-
 ball and other games are to be found here while
 throughout the grounds for a mile or more
 gigantic elms and other fine trees throw a grate-
 ful shade.

On the grounds is a large dining hall, where
 all kinds of necessaries for tourist and picnic
 parties can be had. Dishes and hot water
 supplied. For terms etc. apply to

H. A. BROWN
 MEADOWVALE, ONTARIO

flyer ▶

Photos courtesy of Allan Emerson

early entrepreneur and had visitors met by a horse drawn livery wagon at the CPR Train Station, so he had several financial opportunities going for him. He kept mill ledgers and receipt books that included the names of customers such as, Mr. Russell, the Blacksmith, Norman Hiscox, the CPR Station Agent, and Lucy Kerney. Several receipt books were found in the house when it became the Credit Valley Conservation Authority headquarters in 1965. They are at the Region of Peel Archives in Brampton.

Henry had a lot going for him as well as his involvement in the cultural life in Meadowvale, however, he suddenly lost his life in the spring flood of March 10, 1911. At 6 o'clock in the evening, Henry and his helper, Ken South, had gone by horse and buggy to the dam site to open the sluice. This being spring, the river ice was broken up and a heavy flood was occurring. They inspected the dam to check for any damage. They were caught up in their work and the ice broke and they were both thrown over the dam and accidentally drowned. Mrs. Brown knew something was amiss when the horse pulled the empty buggy into the yard. Several of her neighbours formed a search party and went looking for the two men. That evening, Henry's body was found 300 yards (274 m) down the river and by lamp light the search party continued to look for Ken South, son of Stephen South, who owned George Gooderham's farm behind the Gooderham mansion. His body was not found for two weeks when it was discovered in the Credit River near Sigsworth Reeve's farm.



▲ Ice Jam on the Credit River
(Region of Peel Archives)

Lillie remained in Meadowvale while her daughter, Grace, attended high school in Brampton. Then they closed up their house and moved into Toronto so Grace could complete her education at Havergal College and the University of Toronto, where she studied the classics. She graduated in 1919, became a teacher and taught the classics. Having met the Bull family while boarding in Brampton, Grace had the opportunity of working with William Perkins Bull on his books on

the history of Peel County during the 1930s. She married Luther Emerson in 1935 and they had Jane, 1936, David, 1939, and Henry Allan, 1941. They inherited the Mill site, house and the 106 acres (42.9 ha) of Lot 10, Con. 1, WHS, from Grace's mother, Lillie, in 1949 and they sold the Lot 10 acreage to Bertha and William McKee in 1950.

John Wesley, who was a bachelor, was given the east half of Lot 10, Con. 2, WHS, on June 30, 1896. They lost their mother, Mary Ann, on May 24, 1885, and father, Samuel, on July 19, 1899. Cyrus' wife, Grace, was injured in an auto accident at the farm gate on November 22, 1932, while on her way to a Women's Missionary Society meeting and died shortly after. She was 76. John died on February 3, 1933. Cyrus passed away on September 3, 1937, at the Peel Memorial Hospital. His pallbearers were lifelong friends, William Gooderham, James Pearson, Sig Reeve, William Lambe, Lorne Davidson and Charles Gardner. Only Lucinda, who resided in California, was left of Samuel's children. The Brown family are all buried in the Britannia Cemetery. A monument of Scotch granite, the highest in the cemetery, was put in by Samuel's sons shortly after his interment.



▲ Gravestone

The Samuel Brown house was in the family until 1937, when Cyrus died, then it changed hands a number of times over the years. Charles Pegg was given all of Cyrus' property in 1934, and he sold it by 1947. The last to go was the house sitting on 1.3 acres (0.5 ha). James Carter bought it for \$6,300 on February 8, 1952. He sold to



◀ The Brown/Bull House
(City of Mississauga
Community Services)



Jane and Edward Lillie on June 30, 1952, for \$7,300. Then it came into the hands of Douglas Monro on December 22, 1980, who within a year sold it to George and Lynn Vooro. The City of Mississauga passed a By-law #549-82 on August 18, 1982, designating the house a heritage home. The Vooros put the house up for sale in 1984 and it was purchased on March 30, 1987, by Robert and Betty Bull, who had owned Lilac Lane Antiques in the Cooksville area for a number of years. They sold this lovely house that stands at 620 Derry Road West in October, 2003, and it is now used for institutional purposes. The Silverthorn/Brown house at 7050 Old Mill Lane was owned by Luther and Grace Brown Emerson until it was purchased by the CVCA in 1963. It is presently owned by Michael Balkwill and Judge Nancy Mossip.

Radiant Morn

Radiant morn, with sunbeams streaming,
 Beautiful earth, with sunshine teeming;
 Radiant trees, with dew drops gleaming -
 Like glittering gems, are the dew-drops' rays.

Radiant morn, with birds a singing,
 Beautiful earth, with joys a ringing;
 Radiant flowers, their fragrance flinging -
 Like incense, out on the gypsy breeze.

Radiant morn, with skies of splendour,
 Beautiful earth, so full of wonder;
 Radiant songbirds in notes so tender -
 Are offering the sun-god, their songs of praise.

Poem from Lucinda Brown's book of poetry "The Road of the Years"
 From the Meadowvale Women's Institute Scrapbooks

NEWS ITEM

At the home of Mr. William Cyrus Brown, Meadowvale, two surprise parties assembled to do honour to the oldest member of the Brown family. Having been born on August 14, 1849, Mr. Brown achieved the distinction of octogenarian on August 14, 1929. One thing especially noticeable in the gathering was the large number present who were scions of the old pioneers who had cleared the land early in the last century and who were still holding the farms of their fathers or grandfathers. Mr. Thomas Brown arrived in 1816 and finally settled at Britannia, Peel County, in 1822. His son, Samuel Brown, settled on a farm in Derry West in 1847 and in time he and his family acquired the 400 acres of land from Derry West to Meadowvale which is still in the Brown family.

The Brampton Conservator, August 22, 1929

MEMORIES

"The construction of the rear portion of my grandparents' house in Meadowvale was absolutely unique. I have a vivid memory of the original windows in the back section and I know that it was plank on plank construction. The back door was a slab door with a lock on it. My Grandmother Brown used to sit in her rocking chair by the east window, usually reading the Gazette. I still have that rocking chair in the family, having given it to my daughter, Elizabeth, for her to nurse her baby. It had been made by William Linfoot at Stanley Mills as a wedding gift for my great-grandmother, Isabella Carberry. William Linfoot made all the furnishings for that house and when I was growing up in it, we had furniture dating back to the very beginning of that house. I remember a wooden bathtub carved out of a log. A couple of pieces were even signed by William Linfoot."

H. Allan L. Emerson
 Henry Brown's grandson
 Letter dated Jan. 21, 1998

The Simpson Family - 1838

John Simpson (b.1803, d.1878) purchased Mathew Dawson's 200 acres (81 ha), Lot 10, Con. 3, WHS, in 1837, which had been Evan Richard's 1824 grant. Richard gave his property as a gift to Jane Heron in 1826 and Mathew Dawson bought it for £175 (\$438) in 1828 from Andrew Heron. Dawsons' heirs sold it to John for £659 (\$1,647) on December 1st. He moved his family here in 1838 following the Mackenzie Rebellion.

John had been born a twin to George in 1804, the first children of Joseph (1766-1842) and Sarah Simpson (1782-1870) of Kirby Moorside, Yorkshire, England. They had a daughter, Hannah, in 1811. John married Mary Sigsworth (1805-1883) on June 21, 1824, which was her 19th birthday. They had five children born in England, Mary Ann (1824-1844), Sigsworth (1828-1857), Hannah Louise (1832-1927), Thomas and Elizabeth (1834-1927).

Residence & Mills of John Simpson Esq. ▶
(Historical Atlas of Peel County)



▲ John Simpson
(Gerald A. Crawford)



▲ Mary Sigsworth Simpson
(Gerald A. Crawford)

When the family decided to move to Upper Canada, George Simpson and his sister, Hannah, were the first to leave and George acquired property in Aurora on Yonge Street. John, his family and parents, left England by ship on May 24, 1837, to cross the Atlantic Ocean and six weeks later in mid July, arrived in Toronto. They brought with them three horses, four cows, six sheep, two dogs and several fowl. They took up residence in Whitchurch (near Newmarket). The Simpsons were Quakers and Whitchurch was an active Quaker community that had a meeting house.

Then John acquired his Meadowvale acreage. He called his property Credit Range Farm and he immediately constructed a substantial three room log house and worked to clear more land. He, too, had high expectations like James Crawford, and his first intention was to build a saw, shingle and planing mill and a carding mill. This was the first real activity shown in the area and the year 1836 (although inaccurate as to his arrival) is heralded



as the founding of Meadowvale. John dammed up the Credit River and successfully established an operational dam connected by a 14 foot (4.5 m) wide race to run his mill that had a 12 foot (3.7 m) over-shot water wheel that provided the power to operate his Mooley saws. His carding mill allowed the women in the surrounding area to bring their wool to be made into yarn. He had two employees at the mill who were paid £16 (\$40) a month.

John's acreage harboured a splendid 100 acre (40 ha) white pine forest. At this time shipbuilding was flourishing in Britain and canal construction in the United States, therefore Upper Canada's prime timber was in great demand. The pine forest on his property was a major asset to the district, providing it with economical growth. A 200 foot (60 m) high tree could harvest 6,000 board feet (10 cubic metres) of lumber. The trees were cut and floated down the river to the Port Credit Harbour, which was operated by the Mississauga Indians, where it was shipped to Britain for masts and transported to Rochester and New York State where construction of canals was underway. Some timber was used in Port Credit for barrel staves.

In 1844, John and Mary lost their 20 year old daughter, Mary Ann, and Mary Jane was born to them that same year, becoming her namesake. Around this time, John built a one and a half storey frame house.

John also bought the north half of Lot 9, Con. 3, WHS, 100 acres (40 ha) in 1856 for £162 (\$405). He eventually had 200 acres (81 ha) under cultivation; 140 acres (56 ha) were in crops, which were spring wheat, barley, oats, potatoes, turnips and flax (a 12 to 40 inch - 0.3 m to 1.2 m - plant that contains fiber for cloth garments), 57 acres (23 ha) of pasture land, 3 acres (1.2 ha) of orchards and a market garden. He had strawberries, raspberries, red and black currants, gooseberries and grapes.



▲ Mary Jane
Simpson Graham
(Gerald A. Crawford)

In 1861, it has been reported that his mill was still in operation with two employees who were still only earning \$40 a month, the same as in 1838. It produced 50,000 board feet (15,000 m) of lumber per year, which brought in \$3,000. His farm was valued at \$15,000 at this time. He had farm implements

worth \$1,240, \$670 in livestock and four horses worth \$250.

His daughter Mary Jane married Thomas Graham Jr. (son of Thomas and Ann, 1835-1892) in 1862 and John gave them a piece of land as a wedding gift and Thomas built a two storied red brick house that is now a heritage building. John gave the northeast corner of his property for the construction of the Methodist Church in 1863. With John being a Quaker and Mary an Anglican, they had become Methodists and their church obligations always came first. They were very religious and it was compulsory for meals to be prepared on Saturday and the boys had to clean all the shoes for Church the next day.

Then by 1870, John had constructed a substantial two and a half storey L-shaped, patterned red brick structure with three chimneys and a gabled roof that had a medium pitch with cornice returns at the ends of the eaves that were decorated with ball drop pendants, with a full basement of coarse river stone. On the ground floor there were two kitchens, one was used for the workers and one for baking and preparing food, a pantry and dining room that was used on a daily basis. On the second floor was a dining room that was only used when they had guests. They had hired girls who slept on this floor where the Simpsons also slept. They had several servants who had a separate place to sleep upstairs on the third floor that had four bedrooms -



▲ The Thomas Graham House
(Mississauga Heritage Foundation)



▲ Simpson House
(Region of Peel Archives)

the water wheel, John put in a six foot (1.9 m) turbine wheel which was faster and more productive. The Simpson farm was featured in the *Illustrated Historical Atlas of Peel County* in 1877.

John died tragically in 1878 when he slipped on a loose plank and fell into the millrace beside his sawmill and drowned. He was buried in the Churchville Cemetery. His daughter, Mary, and son-in-law, Thomas Graham, took over the management of his property. In 1888, when they purchased the Gooderham house, they sold the Simpson property on November 30th to James Jackson for \$24,000. In 1895, James sold Lot 9 to his son, Francis J. Jackson, and in 1908 the remainder to William Harris. Francis purchased Harris' acreage in 1910. He was politically inclined and served on Toronto Township council as a councillor, 1903-1906, Deputy Reeve, 1907, and Reeve, 1908-1909. He then sold the northwest half of Lots 9 and 10 to Goldwin L. Smith, a Toronto lawyer, on May 10, 1912, for \$9,973, and 32 acres (13 ha) on October 1st, for \$7338, and another parcel in 1917 for \$8,500. Jackson sold five acres (2 ha) to Miss Mary E. Blacklock in October, 1913, at a cost of \$1,500 for her Rowancroft Gardens. He called his farm "Credit Grange." His house was built by Robert Hayes and he had an addition put on the back to make six bedrooms. His barn burned down in 1930, which was caused by a spark from the threshing machine. It was rebuilt by Douglas Hunter, his son-in-law, who rented it. When Francis retired as registrar of Peel County in 1934, he and his wife, Annie, moved to Brampton. Upon his death from a heart attack in 1937 at age 72, Annie Jackson,

one had a stove to provide heat. The rest of his hired help lived in his other two houses.

On a Friday morning in November, 1874, the Simpson saw mill was burned to the ground with its entire stock to a loss of \$5,000. John had no insurance, but the mill was quickly rebuilt.

With the destruction of

as executor of his will, sold the remainder of the Simpson property, 32 acres (12.6 ha), on March 26, 1946, to Florence and Douglas Hunter.

When Smith bought the Simpson property in 1912, he renamed it "Sanford Farm." He took up residence in the Simpson house and ventured into raising Shorthorn cattle that became prize winners. He bought 68 acres (27.2 ha) of McCracken property in 1922 adding to his farm. When he died in 1949, the farm was sold and it is still a working farm today.

John and Mary Simpson are buried in Churchville in a non-denominational cemetery with his parents and brother, George. In 1980, when Meadowvale was given the prestige of being the first Heritage Conservation District in Ontario, John Simpson was honoured as one of its founding fathers. His last house was designated a heritage home by the City of Mississauga on November 14, 1983, and it is located at 1200 Old Derry Road.



▲ Simpsons' Gravestone



▲ Simpson/Humphries House
(City of Mississauga
Community Services)



MEMORIES



▲ Hannah Louise Simpson
(Gerald A. Crawford)

"I so often think of my dear mother coming to a bush farm, only 40 acres cleared, and she did not grumble. Oh, such a change. Father would say, 'Now, Mary, if you are not satisfied, I will take you back to England.' She would say, 'I can see a better prospect for our family in this country.' And so it went on.

"I spent some very happy days around Credit Range farm. I always had a pony or horse to ride, from when I was ten years old. My sister, older than me, was a good horsewoman and sat very erect on her horse. Those were good times.

"My father's house was always open for preaching or prayer meetings that brought out a number of people, old and young, to our house, and those were the good old-time religious meetings."

Hannah Simpson Reeve, Daughter of John and Mary Simpson, (born 1832, died 1927).



▲ Sophia Emily Reeve
(Gerald A. Crawford)

"Grandfather (Simpson) bought 300 acres of land at a small village called Meadowvale and they lived there till they both died and were buried in Churchville, where their monument stands to their memory. Grandfather built a saw mill and made lumber for sale as well as farming the land. In those days, he was considered a wealthy man. He had a park quite near to his house with two deer and a Guinea fowl there. The house still stands there, but there were three houses on his farm. I can remember their living in two of them before he built a very fine brick house.

"That farm was some establishment. He had his own blacksmith shop and he had a man to do the work. We children used to spend our holidays there and we certainly had a good time.

"There was a big bell on the high post and we did love to ring that for the men to come to dinner off the farm and saw mill."

Sophia Emily Reeve, daughter of Hannah and John T. Reeve, who was born in Burnhamthorpe, Toronto Township, in 1865, and grew up in Churchville. In 1964, at 99 years old, she wrote this account of life on her grandparent's farm, John and Mary Simpson, in Meadowvale. She died the following year.

The Davidsons - 1840

Andrew Davidson came to Meadowvale in 1840. This was at the request of his friends the Browns, who had come over from the British Isles to the United States on the same sailing vessel in 1816. The Browns left in 1824 for Upper Canada (Ontario). The two families kept in touch over the years and finally the Davidsons came to reside in Toronto Township.

The Davidsons originally hailed from the Highlands of Scotland then went to Northern Ireland, where William Davidson (b.1770, d.1847) would take a wife, Elizabeth (1781-1857), and raise his family there. Their sons, William and Andrew, left for the United States and settled in Pennsylvania, where they would have a hint of fame for having worked on the Erie Canal (opened in 1825). They earned enough money to send for their parents.

Upon the Davidsons arrival in Meadowvale, Andrew rented the Johnston farm on Lot 5, Con. 3, WHS, from Richard Casler, and worked it for a few years. On December 23, 1846, he purchased 100 acres (40 ha) of Lot 13, Con. 3, WHS, for £225 (\$563) from James Crawford and moved there as soon as he had constructed a small house. Andrew married Ann Sibbald (1823-1866) in 1848 and they



Mr. & Mrs. W.T. Davidson
with children Lorne
and Ida ▶
(Davidson Family)



▲ Ploughing with oxen
(Region of Peel Archives)



▲ Lorne Davidson, 1940
(The Davidson Family)

would have five children, William Thomas (1849-1920), Elizabeth, who would die in childbirth, Mary Ellen, and two who died young. He built a larger brick house and their property was called Sunnybrae Farm. When his parents passed away, they were buried in the Britannia cemetery.

Andrew put in a cold cellar on the side of a ravine, and had two clapboard barns built from trees on the property. He had a team of oxen called Buck and Bright, a plow and other farm implements. So he was able to cut down the trees and clear the land ready for a garden. He plowed with the oxen around

the stumps and sowed by hand. He cut the wheat by sickle and threshed it with a flail. This procedure had been used until the horse powered threshing machine came into being in 1830 and was purchased to carry out this difficult task. A cradle, which was a scythe with wooden ribs was used to bundle the grain which was bound with straw. This was replaced by the horse drawn reaper, then the self binder. A stump machine was used to clear the grounds free of the tree stumps. When one of the oxen died, the horse, Old Hank, had to work with the other ox. They worked well together and the work was done on schedule.

Brother, William, returned to the United States in 1863 during the Civil War. He enlisted in the northern army and was killed at Fredericksburg. When Andrew passed away in 1873, his son, William (W.T.), took over the farm. He and his wife, Mary Jane Armstrong, had two children, William Lorne (1878-1945) and Ida (1883-1957). He became well known in the community as a skillful farmer, who specialized in alfalfa hay, and a breeder of fine Holstein stock. He kept account books and the business's highest cash sales were: 1919, \$5,532.59 and 1924, \$5,868.76. His lowest cash sales were: 1912, \$2,110.50 and 1930, \$2,590.95.

W.T. died in May, 1920, and was buried in the Churchville ceme-

tery. His wife and daughter inherited his property. Lorne had purchased Nathaniel Steen's farm across the road in 1909, Lot 13, Con. 2, that had an eight room brick house on it built by William Elliott in 1840. Lorne married Frances B. Andrews (1883-1963) in 1913 and they had Mary (1914-2003), and William Ian (1918-2003). In 1920, Lorne bought the family homestead from his mother, who continued to live in the house. Lorne was community minded and was involved with the Meadowvale Methodist Church and took on the responsibility of registrar for the Churchville cemetery where his family members were buried. He held many titles such as president of the Peel Holstein Breeders Club. His prize bull, King Tortilla Acme, provided Canada with about 90 percent of its finest Holstein cattle.

Lorne died in 1945 and son, Ian, who had worked alongside his father all his life, inherited the Davidson farm and carried on. He married Cherie DeGuerre in 1948 and they had Walter, 1949, Virginia, 1951, Lorne, 1954, Cheryl, 1957, Wendy, 1961, and Bruce, 1965. The year that Lorne Jr. was born, the Steen's barn burned down. Ian did not replace it.

Ian started a riding stable in 1964. He had 25 stalls put in an old barn and built a new stable and a 150 foot by 60 foot (45 m x 18 m) attached arena. He started to hold horse shows. He hired Vimmy Siegrist to manage the stables and her girls were well qualified to give instructions. Ian and Cherie's daughter, Wendy, started riding at age six. She became an accomplished rider and went to Mexico in 1979 with the Junior Olympic Riding Team. Her activities were cut back when she went to university. Today, she teaches riding at Meadowlark Stables on Winston Churchill Boulevard.

In December, 1976, the province purchased 40 acres (16 ha) of Ian's property for the Parkway Belt West. In 1996, Ian sold his farm to the Ontario Government when the 407 ETR Highway went through and bought a house in Georgetown. Ian passed away on March 26, 2003.

The Elliott/Davidson house was moved above the 407 to the village of Churchville, which has become an heritage district. Other than that building, located at 7558 Creditview Road and owned by Dian Landurie and Walter de Bruyn Kops, nothing remains of the Davidson farm. Davidson Way, a street in the Monarch development east of the Village, is named for the family and the Ian Davidson Trail hugs the Credit River.

In September, 2003, the mill stone Ian had donated to Meadowvale Village was dedicated and is displayed in a small garden facing Old Derry Road.



▲ Davidson House



◀ Davidson Mill Stone, Bruce, Mark and Leanne

▼ Ian Davidson at his Saw Mill



▲ Davidson Farm Tractor



▲ Ian Davidson



▼ Elliott/Davidson House, 2003



◀ Wendy Davidson on her horse

Four Generations, top row; Lorne, Ian, Bruce, bottom; Ian and John (Maddick) ▶



(Photos courtesy of the Davidson Family)



The First Hotel - 1844



Bell Hotel

(Courtesy of Region of Peel Archives)



MR. GEORGE BELL (FOR YEARS MISTAKENLY REFERRED to as Ball), a blacksmith, is supposed to have built the first hotel in Meadowvale in 1844, according to a study done by the City of Mississauga's Planning Department in 1966 and a pamphlet put out by the Mississauga Heritage Foundation. A City of Mississauga brochure states 1854.

The Land Registry papers show that George Bell did not buy the half acre (0.2 ha) the hotel sat upon until September 5, 1854, from John Simpson, Lot 10, Con. 3, WHS, for £60 (\$150). The Indenture paper says George Bell and his wife, Ann Jane, bought land and premises, so it is very possible that Simpson, knowing how beneficial a hotel would be to the Village, allowed him to build the hotel that early, then sold it to him. George's family resided in a house built by John Simpson. (No connections could be made between George Bell and Hugh and Robert Bell, granted Lot 11, Con. 2 ,WHS, in 1851 and 1857.) George bought a second piece of property from Simpson on October 4th, a quarter acre (0.1 ha) for £30 (\$75), on which he put up a blacksmith shop, which became Lots 11 and 12 of Simpson's Lot 10 of the Village plan of 1856.

The structure that became the hotel was a two-storey rectangular frame building of Georgian Survival architecture that was eventually covered with pebbled stucco. It had a front porch, two brick chimneys and a partial stone foundation The interior central hallway was enhanced with a large staircase, chair railings, doors and wooden moldings that have remained in tact these many decades. It became known as "The Temperance Hotel" and it accommodated travellers from points west heading to Malton or Toronto. When Francis Silverthorn arrived in 1845 and established his saw and grist mill across the road, the hotel catered to out of town farmers who came to the grist mill to grind their wheat into flour or saw mill to have their logs sawed into lumber.

Bell sold the hotel and blacksmith shop to Mathew Laidlaw, the owner of the Commercial Hotel, on May 10, 1856. Mathew passed away on July 12, 1878, and Ann Laidlaw Davis, Mathew's widow, sold it to Albert Lambe in 1890 for \$300, and moved to Brampton. Albert remodeled the hotel to accommodate his saw mill workers and visitors

to the village. John Campbell operated the hotel for him and it did a fair amount of business.

In October, 1948, grandson Albert Lambe sold the building to Mahlon and Mary Croft. The Crofts sold to William Bramhill on February 11, 1954, and he in turn to Peter Buckland on December 10, 1959. Then Joseph and Joan Guerts purchased the old hotel on November 23, 1962.

The former Bell Hotel was designated a heritage house by the City of Mississauga on October 18, 1977, when it was owned by Elisabeth Mowling, who had purchased it in 1976 from the Guerts. It is located at 1090 Old Derry Road and is resided in by Elisabeth, who is a psychotherapist in Streetsville, and her husband, John.

▼ *The Former Bell Hotel/Mowling
Residence, 2002*
(James Holmes)



Silverthorn's Contribution - 1845

WHEN FRANCIS SILVERTHORN FIRST CAME TO the district in 1845 and built a saw and grist mill, he opened up the area



to being established as a true flourishing village. He named his mill, Meadowvale Mills, as the location was so perfectly referred to. The development of the area relied on the benefits of the Credit River and Francis took full advantage of this source. To

quote from the Meadowvale Women's Institute scrap-books, "Meadowvale could boast a substantial Island instigated by Francis Silverthorn for power ability for his mill. A mill race was constructed which brought



▲ Meadowville Mills
(Region of Peel Archives)

the Credit from above and returned it to the River below by the tail of the mill, which encircled the land between its upper and lower reaches." The tall white pines, a mill pond and fertile land all lent to an ideal location for growth and prosperity.

Francis placed an ad in the Streetsville Review on May 10, 1847:



▲ Ad for Meadowvale Mills
(Streetsville Review)

Toronto, a Mr. Dick was one and the gathering throng had a marvelous Christmas celebration.

During the 1850s, the small village grew gradually with new houses being constructed and businesses being established, thanks to John Simpson and Silverthorn's ingenuity in sharing his land when he registered the Francis Silverthorn Subdivision Plan in 1856.

Crawford/Silverthorn Indenture

Francis Silverthorn this day february 10, 1845, purchased seven and a half acres of E 1/2 of Lot 11, 3rd Concession, west of Hurontario Street in the Township of Toronto for the purpose of erecting a grist mill. Thereon, the said James Crawford hereby agrees to allow the said Francis Silverthorn the privilege of one half of the water from the dam erected on the said lot and a part of Lot number 12 adjoining and also allow the said Francis Silverthorn to cut a canal and mill race from the said dam to where he intends to erect the said grist mill. Francis Silverthorn hereby agrees to allow the said James Crawford the free and uninterrupted use of the road.

No. 24902 of the Toronto Township Indenture papers. Indenture between James Crawford and Francis Silverthorn, 1845.

Pearson's Valley Farm - 1846

James Pearson (b.1785, d.1872), who came from Pennsylvania, purchased 200 acres (81 ha) of Thomas Kennedy and William Perkins's grants, Lot 8, Con. 3, WHS, west of the Credit River, on September 23, 1846, for £1200 (\$3,000) from James Kennedy. A small log cabin was at his disposal and only a small portion of the property had been cleared as Kennedy had only managed to make a very modest living from the fruits of his labour. The Kennedy cabin was made cozy with woven carpets and lace curtains.

Pearson was the grandson of James Pearson, who emigrated to America from England and was killed in the Seven Years War in 1759. His son, Nathaniel,



▲ Log Cabin (Ministry of Transportation)

married Ann Bunting of Pennsylvania and they came to Upper Canada in 1801 with their eight children. James was 16 when they settled in Newmarket on Yonge Street, where his father set up a flour mill.

In 1812, James married Jane Lount, the sister of Samuel Lount of Holland's Landing, who became a rebel during the Mackenzie Rebellion in 1837 and was executed for his crimes on April 12, 1838. They had eight children, Philadelphia, 1813, Amelia, 1814, Ann, 1816, Susannah, 1818, Jane, 1821, George, 1823, John, 1825 and James, 1828. James' 42 year old wife, Jane, died in 1830.

He was an agriculturalist at heart, so upon his arrival in Meadowvale, he fit expertly into his farming obligations. His second wife was Hannah Simpson, John Simpson's sister. They had two sons, Joseph, 1834, and Samuel, 1838. Their first spring caused disaster when the river overflowed to flood and ruin the interior of the small



▲ Valley Home Farm
(Region of Peel Archives)

wooden abode. This impressed James to build a sturdier house from bricks made of clay on his own property. They called their place, "Valley Home Farm."

He progressed so beautifully that his property was ranked by his neighbours as a model farm. The old Kennedy place gradually took on a refreshing appearance that eventually classed his farm as one of the best in Peel County.

When James passed away in September, 1872, his youngest son, Samuel, took over his holdings. He was married to Mary Ann Brigden (1845-1885) and they had nine children, four of whom died in childhood. They had an adopted daughter, Maria. He continued his father's plan of improvement: the lawns were designed after their English residence; hired help worked on the farm for 25¢ a day with meals; two gardeners were employed all summer to keep the lawns and flower gardens immaculate. Samuel spent years on public and high school boards, was director of Toronto Township Agricultural Society, 1865, and a Justice of the Peace, 1880. He had his own firm, S. J. Pearson & Son and he imported and bred Shorthorn cattle and Berkshire hogs at his Valley Home Stock Farm. They entered exhibitions around Ontario and garnered many prizes during the 1890s. He took pride in every aspect of his work until January, 1912, when he sold his farm to W. P. Fraser, the secretary of the Ontario Jockey Club. He retired to the Village, where, for \$2,200, he purchased the Victorian style red brick house built in 1862 for Thomas and Mary Jane Simpson Graham from John Stewart, who had bought it from the Charles Switzer estate in 1909. In late January, 1914, Samuel broke his ankle and a few weeks later, March 25th, he died of a heart attack at age 76 and was buried in the Churchville Cemetery.

The Graham/Pearson house, designated in 1980 when it was owned by Dale Howard, is located at 1020 Old Derry Road. Gregory and Margaret Young purchased it from Howard on April 16, 1984. In 1996, they added an enclosed porch on the west side to enlarge the kitchen area. They still reside there with their three children, twins, Whitney and Katie, 17, and Jessica, 14.

AUCTION SALE
OR
Dwelling House
in Meadowvale.
 The undersigned has received instructions from the Executors of the Estate of Charles W. Switzer, deceased, to offer for sale by Public Auction on the premises on
Wednesday, 17th February, 1909.
 at 3 o'clock p. m., that valuable brick dwelling house and lot in Meadowvale, consisting of one half of an acre, more or less, part of Lot No. 10 in the third concession west, Toronto Township, as described in deed registered No. 9122.
 The dwelling is a solid brick two storey house containing seven rooms, with furnace, suitor kitchen and woodshed, and with fruit and ornamental trees, and is well planted with fruit and ornamental trees, and is a most desirable residence.
 The vendors will produce only such abstracts, title deeds and evidences of title as may be in their possession or power.
 The vendors reserve the right to bid once for the property.
 There will also be offered for sale at the same time 1 coal sifter, 1 sprayer, 1 hearse, 1 covered buggy, nearly new, 1 set single harness, 1 covered 14 karat gold repeater - also in first class condition cost \$135.00; also one organ.
 Terms: - For real estate, 10 per cent cash at time of sale, balance in 30 days thereafter without interest. For chattels, cash at time of sale on application to T. S. Mason, Esq., John D. Orr, Meadowvale, Ont., Executors, or to
H. F. JUSTIN, JOHN SMITH,
 Brampton, Ont. Auctioneer.
 Dated at Brampton, 26th January, 1909.



Switzer Auction Sale, 1909 ▶
 (Streetsville Review)



Graham Pearson House and Plaque
 (City of Mississauga Community Services and James Holmes)



The Village Stores - 1847

THE FIRST STORE IN THE VILLAGE, IT HAS been recorded, was built in 1847 by Jonathan Robinson, a bookkeeper, and the second by James Ward in 1849. Jonathan and Judith Robinson did not purchase property until September 5, 1854, which was a section of John Simpson's Lot 10 that cost them £60 (\$150). It could be that John Simpson saw the need of a store and financed Robinson's venture. His store was constructed of slabs on a quarter acre (0.2 ha). On October 24th, he purchased another quarter acre for £25 (\$63). James Ward is mentioned in the Peel County Atlas as having the first store, but his name is not in the Land Registry papers. It is difficult in these later years to sort out these discrepancies.



▲ Gooderham & Worts Mercantile
(Region of Peel Archives)

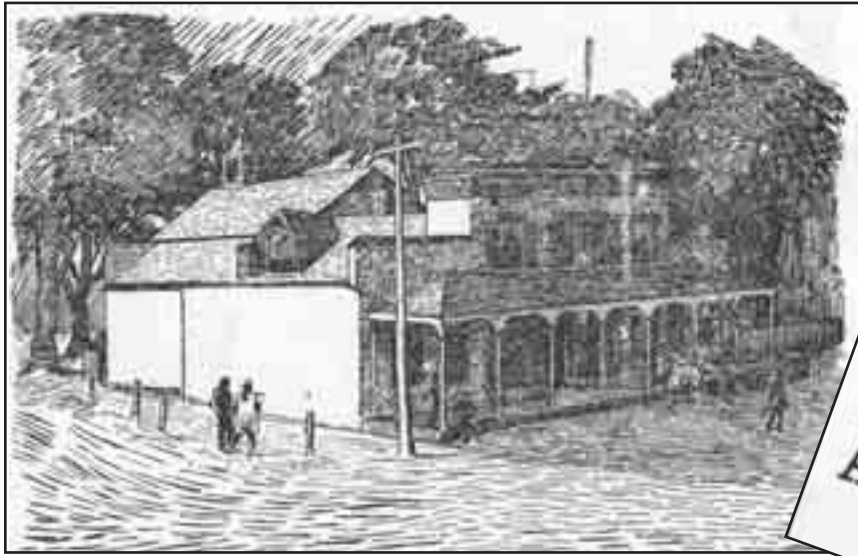
Before these emporiums were established, the people had to travel to Churchville to the north, Streetsville to the west and Toronto to the east. There was not much cash around, so the farmers bartered produce for goods in the store.

Christopher Cheyne held a mortgage on Robinson's store in 1857 and took over the building in 1865. He sold it to William Elliott II in 1874 for \$1,100. When Elliott suffered financial problems and went bankrupt in 1880, Jonadab Hardy purchased the store for \$2,500, and he sold it to William Campbell, a merchant from the Township of Eldon, the following year. When the Robinson store was owned by Campbell, it mysteriously burned down. He sold the lot to Allan McDonald for \$75 on January 18, 1888, and before the year was out it became the location of John D. Orr's blacksmith shop.

James Ward's store was on Lot 11, Con. 3, across the road. It was owned by Mathew Laidlaw in the 1870s, who had owned and operated the Commercial Hotel next door. He closed the store and then



▲ Gardner's Store
(Region of Peel Archives)



opened it again and Frank Sibbald managed it for a couple of years, followed by John Wills. While Wills ran it, the store burned down. The most valuable thing lost through the fire was Mr. Will Couse's apiary (colony of bees). He had the most extensive honey business in this part of the country. Albert Lambe built a house on this site in 1893.

In 1852, Francis Silverthorn built a store that became the property of Gooderham & Worts when they took over his holdings in 1861. It became the most prosperous Mercantile operation in the history of the Village. In February, 1907, when it was owned by Mr. J. H. Whitlam, fire broke out on a Wednesday morning and the buildings and contents were completely destroyed. The only item Mr. Whitlam managed to save was his piano. In April, he held an auction and sold three buildings and all his possessions and left the village.

Others who operated stores were: Charles Switzer (b.1847, d.1908), who was related to the Switzer family at Lisgar. He owned and operated the Silverthorn/Gooderham store from 1881 to 1904; William A. Gardner, who had a store from 1896 to 1903. His wife Mariette's



◀ Top Left: Charles Switzer Store (Harry Spiers)

◀ Bottom Left: Crockery from Switzer Store (Charles Humber)

◀ Lambe Store Ad, 1909 (Streetsville Review)

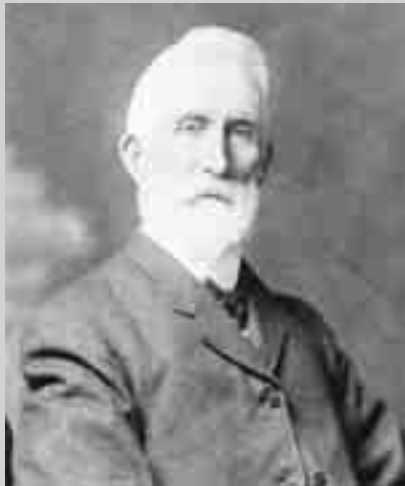
executors sold it to Albert Lambe in 1903 for \$80 and he took over the \$400 mortgage with Francis and Catherine Sibbald; William Lambe started a store in the Gardner building called A.S. Lambe & Son in 1907 that also served as the Post Office. It has been said that Henry Brown had a store and one grocery store ledger is amongst his many mill ledgers at the Region of Peel Archives and it is dated 1911, the year he died. Familiar names are Pearson, Lamb, Watt, Hill, Orr and Gardner. Other than this, no other dates could be substantiated. Francis J. Jackson (former councillor, 1903-1906, Deputy Reeve, 1907, and Reeve 1908-1909) built a two storey brick general store in 1916 next door to Lambe's and his brother, William, who was a Liberal while the rest of the villagers were Conservative, ran it for him. Between 1918-1920, William was the Village's postmaster. Francis sold it to Alfred Hall for \$2,500 in February, 1921. Hall sold it to William Lambe on December 29, 1921, for the same amount. William moved his store there and prospered quite well. The Jackson/Lambe store housed the post office until 1989. Since 1983, the former store at 1060 Old Derry Road, has been resided in by Margarita Fromm, the last postmistress of Meadowvale Village.

Luther Cheyne - 1847

In 1847, at age 16, Luther Cheyne started to work at his brother-in-law Francis Silverthorn's mill in Meadowvale Village. Luther had been born in Derry West to Christopher (b.1801, d.1887) and Jane Ann Cheyne (1808-1872) on May 27, 1831. Christopher and his brother, Andrew (1793-1856), came to the area with the John Beatty caravan in 1819. They settled on the east half of Lot 14, Con. 1, EHS, a grant of 100 acres (40 ha). Their family originated in Armaugh, Tyrone County, Ireland, where they were born.

Andrew built a one storey Colonial design house of river stones pulled from the Rutledge property on the Etobicoke Creek. As soon as the brothers were

settled, they sent for their parents, Christopher (1754-1844) and Elizabeth (1754-1847). There would be five generations of Cheynes who would live in Andrew's house, three born in it. Christopher Jr. met Jane Ann Hamilton (1808-1872) and they were married in York (Toronto) by Bishop John Strachan in 1823.



▲ Luther Cheyne
(Region of Peel Archives)

CHRISTOPHER BUILT A SIMILAR HOUSE AS HIS BROTHER Andrew's in 1825. They had Eliza (1826-1854), Mary Hamilton (1828-1873), who married Francis Silverthorn, George (1829-1906) and Luther (1831-1914). Their brother, George, arrived in 1830 from New York. He married Abigail Walker and they farmed Lot 15, Con. 2, WHS, in Chinguacousy, then moved to Orangeville in Caledon.

In April, 1842, Andrew bought the west half of Lot 14 from Thomas Graham. The Cheynes started their own cemetery when father,



Cheyne Cemetery (Kathleen A. Hicks)



Christopher, died in 1844. There would be 19 family members buried there, all except Luther, who was buried in the Brampton Public Cemetery, and 12 friends such as Thomas Graham Jr., 1871, wife, Mary, 1862, and James Graham, 1874. The last person to be buried there was George Cheyne in 1906 at age 77 years. The family also had a chapel. This cemetery is still in existence on the east side of Hurontario Street at County Court Boulevard in Brampton.

When Francis Silverthorn built a store in 1852, Luther worked in this establishment. Then he became the first post master in 1857 when the post office opened in Francis' store. He lived in the Village and remained in this position for ten years. In 1858, he organized the Orange Lodge and was the first Worshipful Master. His brother George was also involved and served as Deputy Master. On June 10, 1858, Luther bought Lots 23-25 at the northeast corner of Pond Street and Barberry Lane from Francis for \$300 and built a one and a half storey Gothic revival type house that would become known as the Apple Tree Inn in 1920. In 1860, he married Mary Jane Switzer (1843-1873). They had a daughter, Loretta, in 1872, who died at seven months, and a son, William, 1873, who died at age seven. He ran for councillor of Ward 4 in 1861 and won the seat. At this time, he and the circuit minister rode around the countryside by horse and buggy to solicit money to build a Methodist Church. Francis Silverthorn gave him money and lumber but left the area the same year. John Simpson gave a parcel of land to the church trustees and the church was built in 1863. Luther became Deputy Reeve of Toronto Township in 1863, which he held for two years. Mary Jane died in 1873 and Jane Wallace (1851-1946) became wife number two.

A Cheyne Journey

In 1861, Luther Cheyne journeyed to Washington, D.C. to witness the inauguration of President Abraham Lincoln on March 4th. He also managed to attend a reception given in the White house by the outgoing President James Buchanan. At this time, he had the honour of shaking President Buchanan's hand (1856-1860). When he arrived



▲ (l) President Abraham Lincoln, (r) President James Buchanan
(Smithsonian Institute)

home, he noted in his diary in detail all the furnishings he had seen in the president's home. On May 10th, he had the pleasure of witnessing the arrival at the Navy Docks of the Japanese fifth expedition comprising of 21 princes and their attendants for a total of 75 people, who had arrived to sign a treaty between the two countries.

Recorded by a family member with William Perkins Bull in 1930s.



▲ The Cheyne House/Apple Tree Inn
(Region of Peel Archives)

He had three sons and two daughters. In 1876, he was appointed secretary of the Peel Farmer's Mutual Fire Insurance Company. Luther purchased a grist mill in Brampton in 1884 and left Meadowvale. On March 15, 1890, he sold Lots 14 and 15, Con. 1, EHS, to Robert Armstrong. He only operated the grist mill until 1889, but he remained with Peel Mutual until his death on December 29, 1914. His house became the Apple Tree Inn and today it is the residence of Jason and Susan Henderson, 7053 Pond Street.

Sons of Temperance - 1850

WHEN A MR. DICK FROM TORONTO visited Meadowvale in December, 1849, as a speaker at Francis Silverthorn's tea, he promptly organized a Sons of Temperance League. It was said that, "The thoughtful men and women of the day resolved to make a determined resistance to the further increase of evil." The message of the Temperance Society was enthusiastically embraced and hotels were discouraged from selling liquor. By 1854 they had 150 members, who also hailed from Streetsville, Churchville, Brampton and Derry West.

It has been written that "Life without liquor was like a farm without horses to the burghers of Meadowvale in the 1840s. Liquor was cheap. Fifteen cents a gallon, one cent a glass in a tavern and five cents a grunt - a grunt being all a man could swallow in one breath."

The Village at this time had two taverns. Public houses were frowned upon because they were considered a corrupt influence and a report put to the Legislative Assembly in 1849 went like this, "The chief danger to an idle working man was the village tavern or city grocery.



(Region of Peel Archives)

Here the idle can be transformed into a drunkard; his moral condition becomes deteriorated and his follies soon generate into vices; he at length becomes unfit for labour and unwilling to labour and theft and lawlessness soon bring into contact with the courts of justice."

At camp meetings, the young people would gather excitedly, only wanting to have a good time and enjoy the pleasures of the day. Behind every bush, it seemed, were booths, tents and wooden stands with intoxicants, mostly whiskey, at easy access.

Then the Temperance Society came to the Village. These members frowned on imbibing alcoholic beverages. "Woe to those who putteth the bottle to his neighbours lips," they were warned vehemently. Temperance measures brought about escalating prices and whiskey went up to \$20 and \$30 a gallon (converted coinage as pounds and shillings were still in use until 1856). Over the fields and valleys,

Temperance swept through the province, overcoming the temptation until taverns and liquor stores started disappearing from the Village streets. By 1920, the two taverns had been turned into private dwellings.

The Temperance League was still operating in 1873 when it rented the Orange Lodge Hall for six months. William Elliott opened a store in 1874 that sold liquor, so perhaps Temperance was on the decline in Meadowvale at this time. The organization was discontinued for a number of years and on April 5, 1892, was revived and called Meadowvale Division No. 303. This initial meeting was held in the Methodist Church with convener Reverend W.T. Hicks, Grand Chaplain. The application for a charter was signed and the officers elected were: Henry Brown, Worshipful President, William Barnhill, secretary, Charles Switzer, treasurer, Frank Sibbald, P.W.P., and H. T. Ferguson, Chaplain.

It was still in full swing on September 18, 1894, with a good attendance of members. Brothers Garbutt and Johnson visited from Summerville. Brother Lyon hosted an interesting program. October 5th was set for an open meeting with a visit from other Temperance Leagues in the District. Division No. 303 was determined “to show to the people of the District what temperance workers are doing to promote the success and happiness of mankind.”

It was not resolved as to how long the Temperance League survived, but when the Ontario Temperance Act was introduced in the House of Commons on March 22, 1916, to be enforced on September 16, 1917, and prohibition came into effect in North America on January 16, 1920, making the sale and imbibing of alcoholic beverages illegal, these members must have been happy campers. Following the 1926 election, the Liquor Control Board of Canada was established. Prohibition lasted until December 5, 1933.

When a South Peel Temperance Rally to vote on the Canada Temperance Act took place on June 16, 1947, Meadowvale was not on the list of towns and villages that participated. Out of the 16,528 people who voted, the “dry” had won.” in a 8,121/8,407 against the repeal.

Peel Temperance was still functioning in 1951 when Reverend William Weir of Brampton was chairman of the Peel County Temperance Foundation. In August, Cooksville clergyman Reverend W. Buchanan got 9,000 signatures on a petition for the Committee for Revocation of the Canada Temperance Act. The Citizens of Peel voted on November 26th whether they wanted the liquor laws to be governed by the Canadian Temperance Act or the Liquor Control Act.

To quote from the *Port Credit Weekly* on November 29th, “By a margin of almost 2,500 votes, the electors of Peel County on Monday voted in favor of revoking the 36 year old Canada Temperance Act and putting the county under the Ontario Liquor Control Act and the Liquor Licence Act. Unofficial returns show a majority of 2,496 votes for revocation.

“Revocation of the CTA opens the way for establishment of Government licenced liquor outlets in Port Credit, Toronto Township, Toronto Gore Township and Streetsville. The remainder of the county is still ‘dry’ by Local Option and another vote requiring a three-fifths majority would be necessary in the five municipalities before sale of liquor is legal.

“Monday’s vote was the third attempt to have the CTA revoked. The last vote in 1947 upheld the Act. About 50 per cent of the eligible voters went to the polls with 16,760 ballots being cast, 9,628 for revocation and 7,132 against. After the temperance forces had conceded the vote to the Citizens Committee, a victory celebration was held at the Crofton Villa in Cooksville.”

The Organization of Temperance

“Though I am old, yet I am strong and lusty

For in my youth, I never did apply

Hot and rebellious liquors in my blood”

by Adam from “As You Like It.”

The first Temperance Society known to history was founded in 1808 in Saratoga, New York, followed by the Massachusetts Society for the Suppression of Intemperance in 1813. This led to the formation of the American Society for the Promotion of Temperance being organized in Boston in 1826. By 1835, America had over one million members.

After Queen Victoria visited a distillery in 1848 at Lochnager, near Balmoral Castle, and partook of a glass of “crathur,” (beer) the temperance circles were horrified. In 1853, the United Kingdom Alliance was founded and proclaimed “to procure total and immediate legislative suppression of the traffic in intoxicating liquors as beverages.”

The first two Temperance Societies in Canada were established on the same day, April 25, 1829, in Nova Scotia, one at Beaver River, the other at West River in Picton County.

Temperance in Upper Canada was in full swing in the early 1830s. The first Temperance paper was the “*Canada Temperance Advocate*,” published monthly in Montreal as of 1837.

By 1843, there were 386 societies with over 60,000 members in Upper Canada.

From *Before the Bar, The Temperance Movement in Canada*, pages 33, 36, 38.

Damaging Floods - 1850

Although nearly every spring, the Credit River would flood and overflow its banks and cause the local farmers much dismay, some floods occurred at other times of the year. It was in 1850 that flood reports were first recorded detailing the destruction along the River's route.

The most severe flood in Meadowvale occurred on December 1, 1873, which was caused by a sudden thaw during a rain storm. A dispatch was sent on December 4th from Meadowvale. It stated that, "the ice broke up, a temporary railway bridge was carried away, some damage was done to the dam of Gooderham & Worts (which was 15 feet high - 4.3 m) and a large jam of ice and timbers passed down the river about ten this morning."

On September 13, 1878, it was reported in Meadowvale that the flood "reached its highest ever this morning. Fences, bridges, mill dams and, in some instances, cattle were swept away."

In 1893, the wooden bridge over the River on Derry Road, built by Frank Sibbald, was washed away in the spring flood. It was replaced by another bridge. Giant ice bergs would accumulate on the flats and become dangerous as the weather changed with the season.



▲ *The Flooding of Water Street*

(Region of Peel Archives)

The island was served by a roadway called Water Street, appropriately named because it was flooded every spring. But, this, too, was a hazardous area, as during the spring thaw every year it flooded drastically, causing damage to the homes on the tiny, picturesque laneway, which was renamed Willow Lane. Henry Brown named the pond, Willow Pond, for the laneway that led up to it. He rented out boats for people to enjoy the water. Caldwell Brothers cut ice on the Credit River during the winter months and it was shipped for use in ice boxes around Ontario.

On March 10, 1911, while two men, Henry Brown, owner of the former Silverthorn mill, and Kenneth South, were working to prevent damage to Henry's dam during a heavy rain storm, as the ice jam broke, they were swept away and drowned.

October 15 and 16, 1954, was when Hurricane Hazel hit Ontario. The bridge was washed away again and a third one of iron was constructed, which is still there. Living near the Credit River was treacherous. It caused severe flooding that would take pages to tell about. Somehow, the farmers survived the days when the weather was against them and the good prosperous occasions overcame the times of despair.



▲ Ice Jams on the
Credit River
(Region of Peel Archives)

◀ Iron Bridge Looking
east on Derry Road
(Kathleen A. Hicks)

Toronto Township Incorporated - 1850

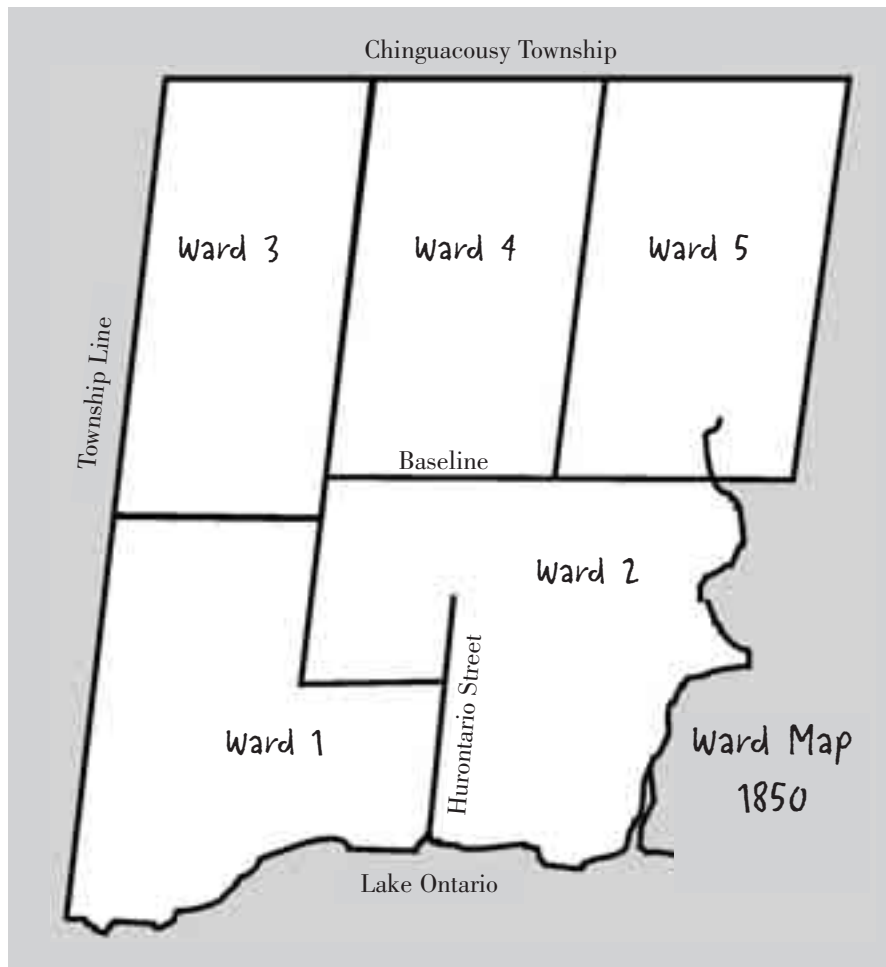
IN 1850, TORONTO TOWNSHIP WAS INCORPORATED under the District Municipal Act, which reads: Incorporation under the Act by the Legislature in the Twelfth year of Victoria, chapter eighty and eighty one; entitled as Act to repeal the Acts in force in Upper Canada, relative to the establishment of Local and Municipal Authorities and other matter of a like nature.

The Township was divided into five wards at a meeting of the Home District Council on October 2, 1849. At an election held the first Monday in January, the councillors for the year of 1850 were decided upon: Ward 1, William Thompson, Ward 2, Charles Romain, Ward 3, Christopher Row, Ward 4, Joseph Wright and Ward 5, Samuel Price. John Embleton was the Town clerk. The Council now had the jurisdiction to hold municipal elections and control its own governmental undertakings.

On January 21st at the Telegraph Inn in Streetsville, the councillors took their oath, then proceeded to appoint a Town Reeve and Deputy Reeve. The yeas and nays for Joseph Wright as Reeve went “yeas,” Price, Row and Romain, and “nays,” Thompson. For Samuel Price as Deputy, “yeas,” Wright, Row and Price, “nays,” Thompson. Joseph Wright became the first Reeve. William Thompson of Clarkson became the Reeve in 1851 and Samuel Price in 1867 at Confederation.

The population of the Township at this time was nearly 7,000.

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▲ Charles Romain
(Region of Peel Archives)



▲ Samuel Price
(Mississauga Library System)

(Kathleen A. Hicks)