

Bobcaygeon, like many other places in Victoria County is an old Indian name meaning "Shallow Waters" and some villagers says the words mean "Rapid Waters". There is no doubt that at one time Indian arrows sliced the air and Indian paddles caused many a white foam as the blades dipped deftly into the waters of Pigeon and Sturgeon Lakes. The three bridges in the heart of the town represent a picture that few artists can truly paint.

Around and about this picturesque place there has always been that the Boyds and sawmills and the buzzing of saws and atmosphere of the Boyd family of pioneer days still pervades. In fact it is safe to say that the Boys and sawmills, or the lumbering industry was the genesis of Bobcaygeon. The days of the Boyd buffalo are still recalled by residents, the days of the Boyd hackneys, phaetons, cutters and sleighs. They built magnificent homes and Miss Sheila Boyd is today one of the most highly respected residents of the town and some years ago turned over to the village and Township fathers the stone building which was for years the office of the Boyd Lumber Company. Recently Miss Boyd paid for the enlargement of this building to accommodate a nice auditorium and the building is also the home of the Public Library, the home of collections of fine antiques and the offices of the Township and Village Clerks.

Another name linked with Bobcaygeon and district is that of Dunsford and it is familiar to many Lindsay people because of the mother of the Edwards family on Russell Street. — she was a Dunsford.

History records that there is often a good deal, especially if the name is derived from a family coat of arms which properly identifies a venerable landmark such as the old house — built in 1838 — the neat outbuildings and broad rolling acres of Beehive Farm.

Situated on the north shore of Sturgeon Lake, four miles west of Bobcaygeon on the Fenelon Falls Road, this fine old estate is the best preserved example of log architecture in North American, according to visiting experts.

The original builders, the Dunsfords, derive descent from a line of Saxon Thanes, who, according to the Domesday Book held larger estates

in the County of Devon, near Exeter in the time of King Edward and fought against William the Conqueror. They were considered landed gentry in the pioneer settlement district of Newcastle in Upper Canada. The Rev. James Dunsford was a Church of England clergyman with a traditionally large and lively family.

His sons, James Wicks, and Hartley, with the family coachman, arrived in the backwoods that was later to become the northern part of Victoria County, in 1838. They probably decided to settle on the shore of Sturgeon Lake at the instigation of illustrious John Langton of nearby Fenelon Falls district.

The Dunsfords purchased four hundred acres of Crown land and they and their man set to pioneering life with strong wills and light hearts. First, there was the planning and superintending of the building of the great two-storey log house, pleasantly situated on a gentle sloping benchland that overlooks the eight-mile sweep of Sturgeon Lake.

Building timbers were for the felling in the backyard clearings in those days and the builders chose the best. The virgin pine logs, broad-axed down to twenty-two inches, quickly raised the walls whose dove-tailed corners still stand four-square to this day.

The Beehive house contains twelve rooms and four fireplaces; a generous entrance hall giving on to a dining room; drawing room, library and kitchen. The broad staircase leads to numerous bedrooms on the second floor.

The building cost a good many pounds Sterling, even in those days, but the builders were shrewd enough though they had ample private means at their disposal. They foresaw the return of a good portion of the buildings costs in the harvesting of district timber.

The Rev. James Dunsford, his wife and family arrived at The Beehive from England in 1839. His son, James, soon after became associated with John Langton and Mossom

Boyd in the lucrative lumber trade.

The forest cover of Beehive Farm contained scarce and valuable mast pine that soon attracted purchasing agents of the Royal Navy. They marked the great virgin trees with the broad arrow blaze of the youthful Queen Victoria. The huge timbers were cut and floated down the Kawartha-Trent-Lake Ontario - St. Lawrence River water chain to Quebec and loaded into the holds of wind-jammers for England.

The Dunsford family gradually moved away from the Beehive. Various owners occupied it for many years until a Colonel Plummer began to restore the old buildings. Following him was Edgar Watt of Toronto, who owned the estate for many years.

Both of these gentlemen spent a good deal of money in upkeep to buildings and to the grounds. Consequently, Beehive Farm was extremely well preserved when ownership passed in 1957 to Mrs. Mavis Fuller and Len Cary, both of Bobcaygeon.

The fine old log house has now been turned by them into a gracious inn. A nine-hole golf course has been laid out, which has a modern clubhouse in conjunction with it. And the blending of the finest living of pioneer Ontario with the ultra modern facilities of a waterside marina has turned the Beehive into the most pleasant play spot in Ontario, to suit visitors of all tastes.

The marina service centre for cruiser, and motor tourists is the finest of its type in the province.

The marina at Beehive Farm, though a facet of Space Age pleasure, is an integral part of the historic whole; its lumber, like that of all the buildings on the estate, was sawn from selected trees in the woods of the farm, a source of building material since the beginning of the reign of Queen Victoria.