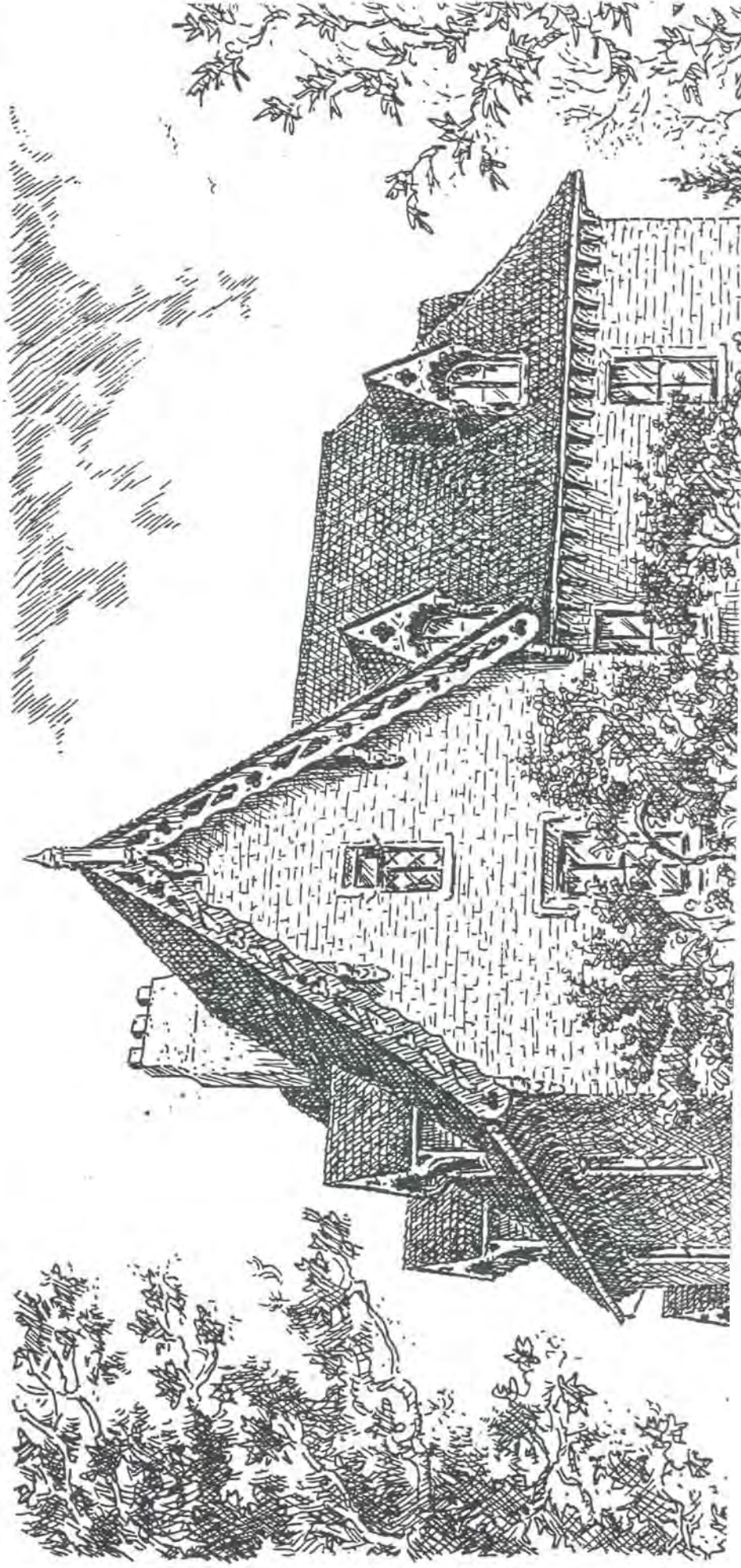
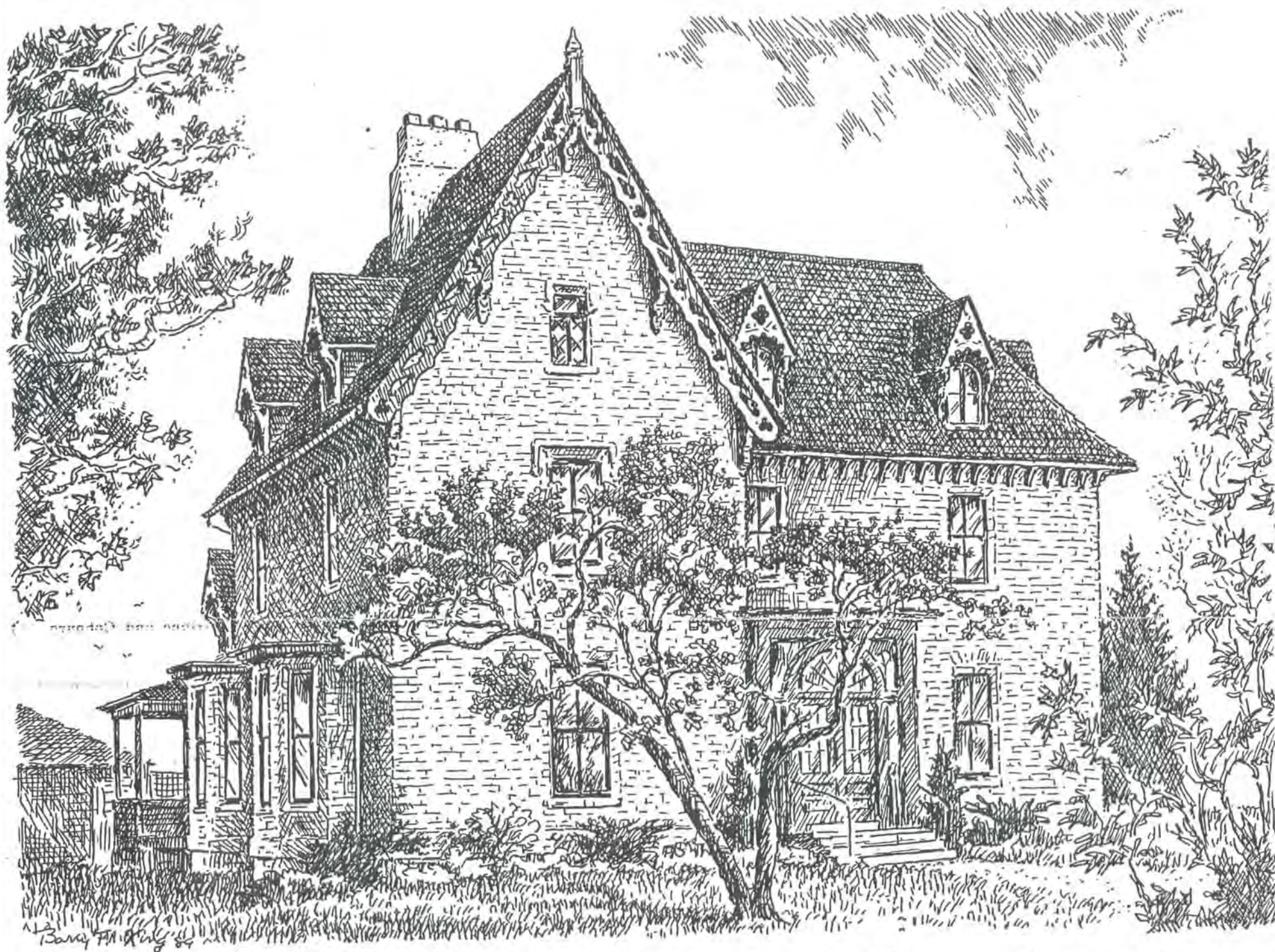


Dromore history repeated

By Barry F. King



4. Dromore Family (07-01)



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It was the exceedingly complicated boundary between Maine and New Brunswick that was to bring two surveyors, Thomas Dumble and his son John Henry Dumble, to Cobourg in the 1840's.

A dangerous dispute had arisen over the demarcation of the line running north from the St. Croix river and dividing state from province. Acadian settlements, the link between the Maritimes and Lower Canada, and valuable timber lands were claimed by both the British provinces and the United States. Not just a war of words, but the 'Aroostok War', as it was called, broke out between lumbermen from New Brunswick and Maine. Both governments dispatched troops to the Aroostok river valley in 1839. A treaty, in 1842 ne-

gotiated by Lord Ashburton, representing the British interests, and Daniel Webster, as his counterpart in the United States, finally settled the line and provided for the surveying and marking of the compromise boundary.

After his boundary work was completed, Thomas Dumble decided to stay in Canada and set up a surveying business. Settling with his family in Cobourg, Thomas built, in 1857, his grand Gothic Villa on the corner of George and Have-lock streets. He and his wife had lived in Dromore,

County Down, Ireland, before coming to Canada, and so chose the name 'Dromore' for their new home.

Originally surrounded by about an acre of ornamental gardens, the three storey brick residence retains its eye-catching appeal today. The steeply pitched gable of the main structure, and the high mansard roof of the south wing are the first features to attract attention. A collection of nine dormers, each with a round-arched window, roof brackets, and carved gothic quatrefoils, surrounds the house and a large three-potted chimney sits prominently on top. Following along the roof's steep slope, the elaborate gingerbread includes gothic trefolls in its design. Five large brackets, with an interesting motif composed of crest, four leaf clover, and the letter 'D' (for Dumble?),

support the gable.

An illusion of height is created by the three windows of the main wing, as they gradually decrease in size toward the uppermost one. Accent moldings or labels are included above these second and third floor windows. At the rear of the building is a stained glass window positioned over the staircase inside. Bay windows on the north side and an ornate entrance porch, similar to the original, with round-arched transom and side windows, complete the facade.

The Dumble's son John Henry led an interesting and successful life at Dromore. With Henry Covert, John leased the Cobourg and Peterborough Railway in 1859, and, as managing-director, helped to develop its connections to the Mar-mora mines in 1865. The first officer in command of the Cobourg Garrison Artil-

lery, Capt. John Dumble led the 'gunners' at time of the Isle of Orleans artillery competition in 1890, when they won all the events. A striking group they were, in their uniforms of blue and scarlet, with busbies on their heads. After a full life as surveyor, lawyer and engineer, John died in 1903. The uniquely beautiful house remained in the family for many years.

Dromore, with its high pitched roof and heavy, richly carved barge board trim, is being restored and remains an architectural treasure. Remarkably, a strikingly similar home can be found just across the county boundary, in Peterborough (321 London St.). The builder, in 1869, was a barrister with the uncommon name of David W. Dumble. But that's another story. ▴