

Belle C. (Simpson) Ashcroft

-1942

Mrs. Ashcroft was the first white girl born on Indian lands, presently Park Head area, Bruce County. As a young girl, she taught in the lonely backwoods, wrote for magazines and had the distinction of never having a manuscript returned.

The first school house of the area, which she attended, was built of hewn cedar logs and had a handmade desk, a melodian and benches that could be pulled up around the stove in cold weather. In those early pioneer days, her home, the Simpson home, was the only polling booth for the first known election in Bruce County, in 1867. Her father was the first postmaster of the area.

Her great-grandfather, William Davie, came to Canada in 1820. Her great-great-uncle, John Breakenridge Davie, was one of the first to go to the gold rush of 1849. The noted violin maker, John Breakenridge, of Park Head, Scotland, left his favourite violin in his will to the little John Breakenridge in Canada, which came, in time, to Belle Davie, Mrs. Simpson, who was Mrs. Ashcroft's mother.

Letters from John Breakenridge of Park Head, Scotland, written as long ago as 1823 and delivered safely to the Simpson family, before the time of envelope, stamp or seal, have been saved. And so, Park Head, Scotland, and Park Head, Canada, Bruce County, are joined together through those who loved the Canadian Belle as much as the Scottish people, who loved her mother, the Scottish Belle.

Mrs. Ashcroft, for a number of years, was the gracious, smiling hostess at the 'House by the side of the road' for summer visitors at Howden Vale on the shores of Lake Huron. Apart from raising a large family, she found time to be a teacher, writer, lecturer for the Provincial W.C.T.U., time for the Native people in the area and to contribute substantially to life in Bruce County, Ontario.

Henry Baker

1805-1887

One of Grey County's early pioneers, Henry Baker, operated what was known at that time as a provision store in Sydenham, now Owen Sound, as early as 1863. It is also noted that in 1865 he was a teacher of Modern Languages. He taught school at Annan and later in the Grammar School, Owen Sound.

An excellent translator of both French and German authors, he compiled a book of his translations that included over 80 stories. He was also a poet and made use of local subjects such as Indian Falls in Sarawak township.

Souvenir Of Owen Sound

1860

Le Souvenir 1867

Montreal

John Lovell St. Niceolas