

The Applegarth Family

In 1791 William Applegarth came from Durham, England and settled on the Plains Road, on the Broken Front bordering the Short Trail from the Landing Place to the Indian Villages on the Heights near Puslinch Lake, Beverly, Westover and Lake Medad. His land was across the road from David Fonger who had lived in Canada for eight years, opposite the site of St. Matthew's Church (built seventy years later) to the western boundary of Oaklands Park.

In 1806, Col. Brown, an agent for the Northwestern Fur Traders Co., in York (Toronto) bought several hundred acres of land on Waterdown Heights. After his grandson, Alex, married Sarah Applegarth, a sister of William, her father divided his estate, keeping Oaklands as the old homestead, and the land from Oaklands to the Short Trail became "the Brown Property". The Indians followed the Short Trail to Lake Medad and returned in a few days by the Long Trail to the Beach. The Short Trail passed along the driveway beside St. Matthew's Church and crossed the Plains Road beside Frank Scheer's red brick house, built when the Scheer brothers, Albert, Will and Frank, bought the gravel pit, now Cook's. It followed the line of David Fonger's

farm, across Skunk's Hollow and toward Waterdown Mountain along the Gallagher farm.

The Applegarth School was on the site of St. Matthew's cemetery, a lovely word, meaning "a sleeping place". The Applegarth homestead, known as Oaklands Park is one of the few remaining large farms, with several of the original buildings still standing. W.R. Mitchell, chairman of the School Board and a member of the Board for thirteen years, occupies the oldest of the Oaklands houses, while the big house built by John Fuller, the son of the first Anglican Bishop of Niagara, is the home of Mr. and Mrs. Conrad Scotchburn and their family. The Short Trail from the Bay to Waterdown Heights was indirect for increasing traffic, and the "New Waterdown Road" was constructed over a hundred years ago. South of the Plains Road it was cut through the Applegarth estate to Brown's Wharf, leaving a small survey between, now known as La Salle Park. This was subdivided into small lots of two to five acres. In 1875 four houses are marked on this western frontage of the park road. A frame