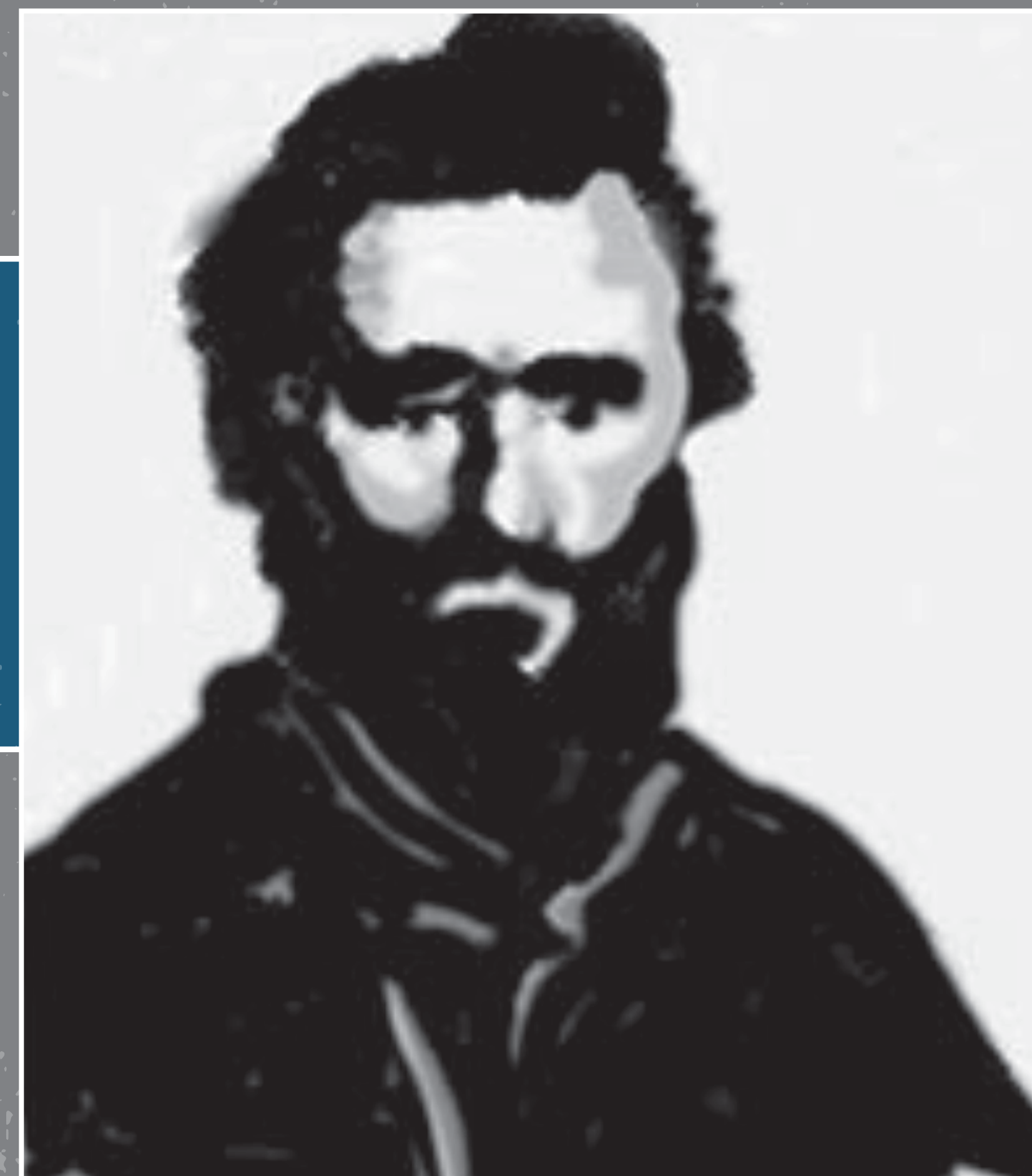


DR. WILLIAM KING

TEACHER, PHYSICIAN,
MURDERER



THE BACKGROUND STORY

By the values of society in the mid-1800s it was **considered a good match**. Sarah Lawson from the successful farming family of Lawson Settlement just east of Brighton, was well suited for the role of wife, mother, and home manager. William Henry King of Codrington, was sure to prosper as a teacher and possibly a farmer as well, coming from good farming stock.

It was on January 31, 1853 that they were married and **by November 4, 1858 it was all over - she dead and he on the run** for his life! All over for the marriage, certainly, but the drama was just beginning.



William was a local boy, born in Prince Edward County, the eldest of ten children in a prosperous family. **He was smart, too, and at 18 was attending normal school** (teacher's college) in Toronto. By then, the family had moved to the future village of Codrington in Northumberland County's Brighton Township.

Sarah Ann Lawson was the same age as William, and it was during his time at normal school that he began to court her. **It was a short courtship. He was just 19 and still at school when they were married** and moved to Toronto. That fall, as a graduated teacher, he accepted a position teaching physiology in the progressive Central Public School in Hamilton.

Marital bliss, it appears, was fleeting. Later that autumn, Sarah returned to Brighton to live with her parents. She was pregnant, and wished to be under the care of her mother, she said. But there were other reasons: William was insisting that his wife "was not the virgin I married her for", and in a number of letters **accused her of infidelity**. And Sarah, for her part, **accused her husband of "misusing" her**. All this while they awaited the birth of their first child!

George Henry King was born on January 12, 1854 and died on March 18, 1854. **It was said William had "manifested much dislike" for the child.**

