

AN HISTORICAL WALKING TOUR OF COBOURG



by
Colin Caldwell

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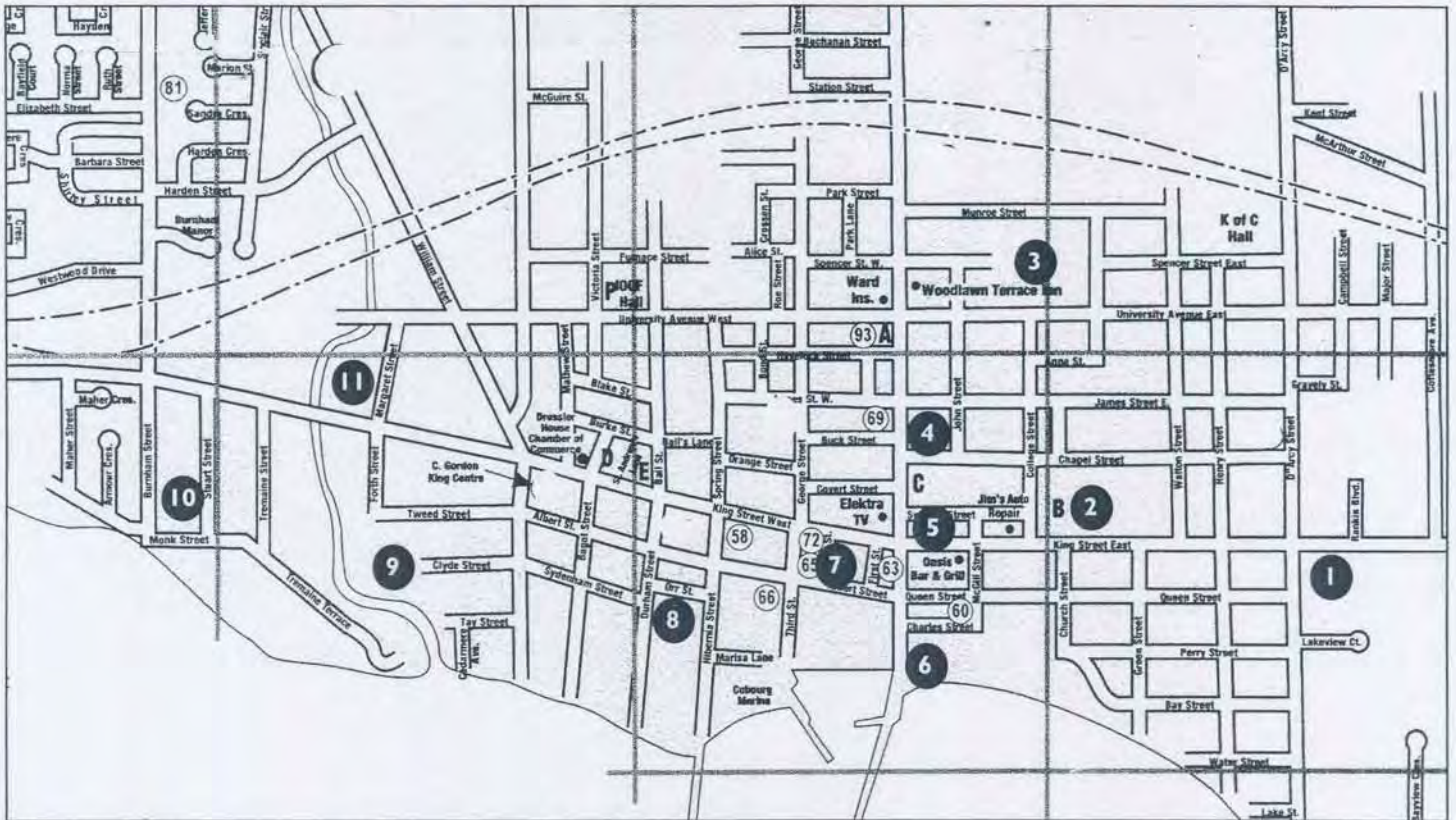
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Map of Cobourg

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INTRODUCTION

This year, 1998, Cobourg celebrates its two hundredth anniversary of first settlement. This guide book offers you an introduction to some Cobourg scenes that capture a bit of the flavour of those early years and of the story they convey.

Cobourg's story is that of a great attempt. An attempt to create a place of significance, first for its own district, then for the province, then, with perhaps too great enthusiasm, for the whole country. It didn't work, but, paradoxically, the effort -- perhaps even the failure of that effort -- left Cobourg with the precious legacy of having much of its architectural record intact.

First some history. No pioneer ever set out to found Cobourg. Even the question of who our first settler was, was decided later by an administrative convenience. We don't know anything about Eluid Nickerson, really, and I'm sure he'd be as surprised as anyone to find himself a historic figure. Readers of this guide will soon find that I favour Elias Jones as the earliest hero of the many who will populate our tale.

What really happened was that two small hamlets, Amherst and Hull's Corners, sprang up on the high road from York (now Toronto) to Kingston. One of those hamlets, Amherst, was chosen, in 1806, to be the centre for the civil business - the courts and the administration - of the district of Newcastle, of which Northumberland County was then a part.

Slowly the two hamlets increased in size to match the growing community of Hamilton Township.

The need for a harbour eventually found its natural outlet by the mouth of one of the two creeks in what is now the Town of Cobourg. It turned out that our two town-founders, Eluid and Elias, were already living there.

Now called Cobourg, the community's role in local government brought men of influence and position to make it their home. Some twenty years after the first settlement, the harbour caused shops and

began to prosper, so the harbour community flourished as well.

The new villages in the back country - centred on Peterborough - stretched along a string of rivers and lakes that reached north and west. This invited the Cobourg townspeople to try to harness that highway and tie it to the main stream of commerce to which Lake Ontario gave them access.

From the moment early Cobourg people like George Boulton or Ebenezer Perry, Zaccheus Burnham, Captain Boswell, James Grey Bethune, or good old "Squire" Robert Henry, saw the Trent and Otonabee Rivers and the Kawartha Lakes, the story of Cobourg had begun.

"Look at the map!", said the Cobourg Star of 1831 in almost its first issue. Anyone who could not see the destiny of Cobourg was blind. What anyone could see was, as they would put it -

"...a string of silver lakes and streams with contented British settlers along its shores, by-passing the impassible Niagara and bringing the wealth of the north and west down, almost of its own accord, to within a hair's breadth of the great commercial highway of the St. Lawrence."

To Rice Lake, in fact, from where the waterfalls of the Trent River made further downstream progress on the Trent virtually hopeless. A scant thirteen miles overland from Rice Lake, however, lay Cobourg and its harbour.

This, then, is the logic that underlies our Cobourg story. Every effort to attract more settlers to the back townships, to build the artificial harbour, the plank-roads, the Peterborough railway, even the construction of Victoria Hall, follows from that cry "Look at the map!"

The map they had in mind was that of the whole Ontario peninsula. To them Georgian Bay, the



COBOURG REGIMENT

warehouses to spread along the newly laid-out Kingston Highway, now Hwy 2. As the district began to take shape around them, the new men noticed how close their village was to an important waterway through the still little-known territory to the north of them.

This was the old Indian canoe route through from Lake Ontario to Georgian Bay. New experiments at planned settlement - with new settlers from Europe - brought people to open up the land along that route. As they



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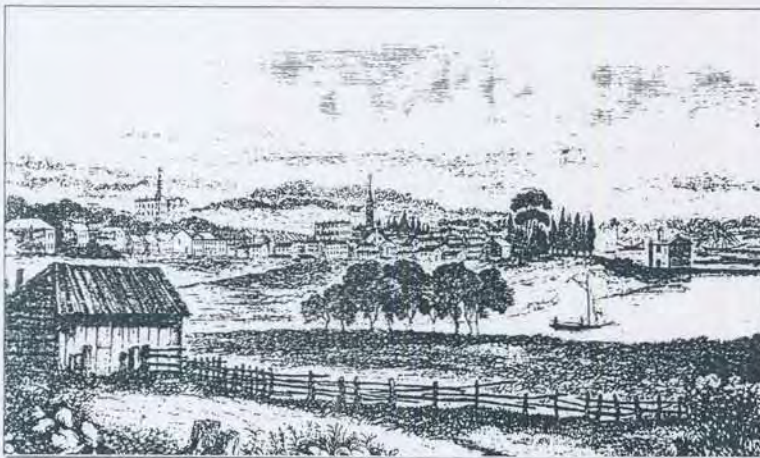
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VIEW FROM WELLER'S HILL

key to the really far west, ought, surely, to link up directly with the north shore of Lake Ontario via the Trent system. That would avoid Lakes Huron, St. Clair and Erie, and especially the Niagara River. And the best harbour for that link would be Cobourg.

If they had been successful, history would have wiped Cobourg's architectural slate clean in an all-effecting metropolis, that probably would have stretched from Cobourg to Gore's Landing. That metropolis could easily have become the capital of the province, or even of the country as some of the town fathers, no doubt, dreamed.

The failure of those early dreams left the outline of the story to remain for us to see in the buildings and streets and creek mouths in modern Cobourg. In the grandiose Victoria Hall, where early visitors, quite reasonably, looked at the town surrounding it and asked "Where is the city for which this was built?"; in the width of HIBERNIA ST. where the Cobourg and Peterborough Railroad engines once, briefly, steamed north through the town looking for

western wheat; in traces, either of Boulton, "Family Compact" political glory in "The Lawn", or of Elias Jones' first industrial mill weir on Factory Creek.

Cobourg, truly, is blessed with what can only be called an embarrassment of historical riches: seven provincial historic plaques, one national and a number of local; a wealth of beautiful old buildings; a coherently preserved town style and haunting traces of its past, even, as you will

KING ST. It must be pointed out that almost all of these houses are private homes, so they should be examined with suitable decorum and respect for privacy.

In each case, I have indicated in the text how to link up a house-tour or two with a historic site. And vice-versa. All the tours, done at once, would really exhaust a day.

Now the good part. You should be able to mix and or combine most of the house tours, or none, with most, or none, of the historic sites. You can start or stop anywhere, and you'll not get confused any more than you normally would. You could enjoy an excellent morning's jaunt, for example, by combining Sites 2, 3 and 4 with House-tour 2. Lengthen that by simply crossing DIVISION ST. after Site 3, and adding on House-tour 5. Or if you hadn't had enough by the time you got to Site 4, add on sites 5 & 6 and do House-tour 1 in reverse.

Surprisingly enough, not everyone can live on a steady diet of history tours. For those who flag, a general rule-of-thumb is that downtown Cobourg, along KING ST. has small local shops and restaurants in plenty, whereas nationally known establishments are to be found on WILLIAM ST. and in Northumberland Mall to the north-west. Only one part of the tour takes you a fair walk away from convenient refreshment, and it centres on a park and creek. An excellent "nature walk" would include Sites 8 to 11 and the Cobourg Trail (directions in text). This last takes you close to the fast-food/shopping-mall region of town.

Associated in the booklet with each historic site are early pictures of the site - for useful comparison - and boxes in the text with either stories or further elaboration on some of the themes. The boxes are designed to lift the "history-buffs'" spirits, by providing a broader picture of the historical flow, and, perhaps, giving the expert a reason for disagreeing with the author's view. They also give the expert something to read to distract attention from the other, inevitable, irritations, such as people suddenly discovering they're thirsty, that the car wasn't locked or that the picnic hamper is now, for some unaccountable reason, floating away down that historic brook.

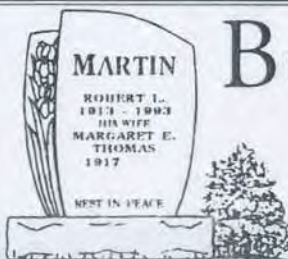
see, in the turn of a street.

THIS BOOK:

The guide identifies eleven "historical sites", and they are close to KING ST. which is the main street of town. They stretch, in order, from the East edge of the downtown to the West edge. You do not need a car to see all eleven, but it's a fairly long walk. About a mile and a half separates Site 1 to Site 11.

These sites are like vantage points from which some aspect of Cobourg history can be explained. From each you can usually see or do two or three things at once.

Linking them, loosely, are five "House-Tours". These are walks through some favourite parts of Cobourg - again, all downtown and within easy reach of



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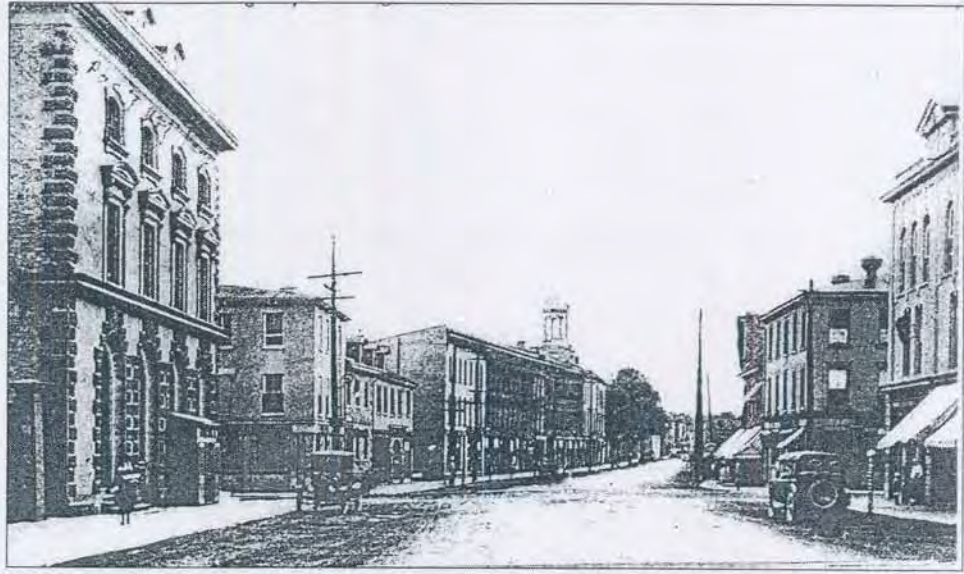
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It would, of course, be impossible to include every building or site in Cobourg which is worthy of attention. This is a personal selection, intended as much to encourage as to satisfy your curiosity about the town's past. Much more complete reference can be found at the Cobourg Public Library. Do not hesitate, either, to stop at Dressler House (House-tour 4) where the Chamber of Commerce has more information and brochures. There are many more Cobourg sites which are only accessible by car.

Finally, if I were to offer a word of caution, it would be never to assume that a building is insignificant because it is not noted in these pages. I have barely scratched the surface.

Good luck.



KING STREET IN THE 1890'S

named) in 1824 to become the registrar for Northumberland County and was intimately involved in every part of the settlement of the district. He was, among other things, a member of the Assembly and the Legislative Council of Upper Canada. His nephew D'Arcy Edward Boulton, built the "regency cottage", known as "THE LAWN", behind the cedar hedge at the NW corner of D'ARCY and QUEEN STS. This house, begun in 1838, was the target of an unsuccessful patriot assault on Cobourg in the aftermath of the Rebellion of 1837. D'Arcy went on to become mayor of Cobourg (several times) and head of the Cobourg-Peterborough Railway. The oldest part of "THE LAWN" faces south, the rest having been added by the architects Darling and Pearson in the 1920's. Their renovations mark this as one of the few downtown

vestiges of Cobourg's glamorous resort era. At the foot of D'ARCY ST. stood Cobourg's first hospital, a barn converted to that use during the plague year of 1832. West of D'ARCY ST. along the lake, is the area long known as "Corktown" after early Irish immigrants who, as in Toronto's Cabbagetown, tended to settle there. DONEGAN PARK, toward the lake on the east side of D'ARCY ST., once formed part of the "Boulton Woods" and was used for militia exercises and horse races.

The Boultons were among the most prominent families in Upper Canada. Their marital connections with other families in Toronto literally gave rise to the term "Family Compact". (Grandfather D'Arcy Boulton, after whom D'ARCY ST. is probably named, heads the "Family Compact" list set out by

COBOURG'S NAME

Cobourg was most likely called Port Hamilton at first, along the lines of Port Hope and others. It was called other, less complimentary things as well, but in April of 1819 the citizens met at the local school-house (according to the Kingston Chronicle) and decided on the name Cobourg to celebrate the marriage of Princess Victoire of Cobourg in Germany, to the Duke of Kent. To this couple, a daughter, Victoria, was born on the 24th of May, 1819. By a complicated bit of Royal succession, she became Queen Victoria, her birthday became our first national holiday and Cobourg ended up with a truly worthy, though accidentally mis-spelled, name.

HISTORIC SITES

SITE 1: BOULTON'S HILL/WOODS

This hill, on the east edge of town, balances Weller's Hill on the west. George Strange Boulton built "Northumberland Hall" on the highest point of this hill in 1825 (Demolished. 1974). Boulton moved here from Port Hope (which he is credited with having

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their arch-enemy William Lyon Mackenzie). One uncle, Peter Robinson, founded Peterborough. Another, John Beverly Robinson founded the Law Society of Upper Canada. D'Arcy's father built "THE GRANGE" in Toronto, now part of the ART GALLERY OF ONTARIO. His brother William, while Mayor of Toronto, founded the CNE. The Boultons were lawyers, who also helped build Cobourg Harbour, the Trent waterway and the county road network. Both Sir John A. Macdonald and Cobourg's "Father of Confederation" James Cockburn, at one time partnered in the Boulton law firm.

To complete our picture of Boulton's Hill, move south to PERRY ST. and turn west. On the north side you will notice (#'s 226-240) a number of Ontario Cottages, built in the 1850's by D'Arcy Boulton for his servants. This was generous, by contemporary standards, but not extravagant. Throughout the literary portrait drawn by visitors to Upper Canada, there runs a common thread of the scarcity - and therefore the importance - of good servants. According to most newcomers, anyone wishing to enter domestic service in the colony, even for a short time, could easily earn enough to set up on their own. So, too, democratic principles had so quickly travelled north from the States, that it was difficult to maintain the rigid class divisions of England. D'Arcy was probably being prudent. Behind 240 you can just see - from the street - what may have been the Boulton's green-house and coal shed.

Directions: Walk along PERRY to HENRY ST. go north to QUEEN and begin House-tour #1, which takes you to Site 2; (Note: The house tour route is also the most direct.)

Site 2; ST. PETER'S CHURCH.

The first church on this site was built of wood in 1820, though an Anglican minister was conducting regular services here before then. The site was purchased from John Spencer for ten pounds lawful money. The present church was built by Kivas Tully in

1854. It was built around the original church, while services continued to be held inside. When it was complete, the parishioners repaired to the specially cleaned out malt-house at Calcutt's Brewery for a service, while the old church was dismantled from the interior of the new. The Rectory dates from 1876-7.

The Anglican church, through its claim to be the "established" church, dominated the official spiritual life of Upper Canada, though it never had a clear preponderance of adherents. As late as 1824, the Anglican church was the only church authorized to conduct marriages, as marriages were legal acts. The Anglicans also laid exclusive claim to the benefits to be derived from the "clergy reserves", one-seventh of the land in the province, which had been set aside for the "Protestant Religion". These reserves were among the most bitterly contested problems in Upper Canada life. In January 1836, Lieutenant-Governor Colborne arbitrarily granted land from those reserves to 44 Anglican parishes throughout the province. Cobourg's parish was among these, and some property in the east end of town was intended as a source of rental revenue for St. Peter's during the last century.

Take up a position in front of the Church proper. Stretching to the west along KING ST. from COLLEGE ST. (which bounds the church property towards town) is the district long occupied by Cobourg's distinguished roster of hotels. The glamorous "Arlington Hotel", once graced the north verge of what is now VICTORIA PARK. The Steamboat, later Albion, whose image adorns a Canadian collectible coin, stood on the north side of KING, west of COLLEGE. Beside it was the "Globe". (Near the ice-cream parlour). These were the focal point for William Weller's Stage Coach lines, the

first to link Toronto and Montreal. His stables, repair shops and blacksmiths filled the modern SWAYNE ST. to the west and slightly north. (There is a Historic Plaque to Weller in the park across the street.) The modern shops you see on the south side of KING to the west of the park area, date from 1830's and 40's. Opposite them, at 20 KING E., you will find the last remnant of the hotel strip, once another Albion Hotel, now an apartment and shops. It is said to have served as a hospital for soldiers in the Fenian Raids of 1866. In the park opposite the church you will see a marker to Lenah Field Fisher, who was among those who brought disparate sections of private and public land together to form the current VICTORIA PARK. The main body of the park, between the beach and QUEEN ST., was once known as "Perry's Common". As properties became available, the park expanded. Some thought is now being given to adding to the park the property of the recently torn-down Chateau Hotel (the empty lot on the NW corner of KING and MCGILL), in the spirit of those earlier additions.

The park gates were installed in 1948 as a memorial to WWII. On the present cenotaph (out of sight in the



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centre of the park) a bronze plaque commemorating the Merchant Navy has just been dedicated.

In the churchyard beside St. Peter's, you may wish to notice the graves of Capt. Boswell and Jacob Corrigan. Also the broken stone to George Boulton and his wives. Moving EAST you will find, opposite the Rectory the original COBOURG COLLEGIATE. The building is said to have been designed along handwritten notes, copied from a book of school architecture from England. It used to have a cupola in the middle of the roof, and is now apartments.

Directions; Either proceed directly up COLLEGE ST. to the College, or take House Tour #2. via WALTON, HENRY and JAMES STS. The house tour will take about 20 min.

Site 3; VICTORIA COLLEGE.

The first and greatest of Cobourg's magnificent landmarks, built and designed by Edward Crane. A Methodist Church conference in Hallowell (now Picton) in 1827 determined to establish a non-denominational Academy of Learning. The building took years to complete and cost a fortune for its time. The cornerstone (whose location has long been a mystery) was laid in 1832 and classes began in 1836. Originally called "Upper Canada Academy", to distinguish it from Toronto's "Upper Canada College", in 1841 it received a royal charter to grant degrees under the name "VICTORIA COLLEGE".

In 1893 VICTORIA COLLEGE united with the University of Toronto and moved to its present location in Queen's Park. Since 1893 it has been used as a hospital and seniors home. On the grounds east of the building stood Faraday Hall, Canada's first science building. Two of its gargoyles survive on a facade on DIVISION ST. (now DOSS office supplies). Behind the college can still be seen a remarkable, though neglected, nineteenth-century "ice-house", and the SPENCER ST. Gatehouse.

The only provision for higher education in the province at the time gave the Anglican Church the leading role. The Methodists wished to create one with no religious preconditions, which would also teach both men and women. They chose Cobourg, partly for its location and partly for the generous donation of land by John Spencer, the owner of "The Poplars". As they could expect no help from government for such a project, they collected donations from members of the church across the province. Since many Methodists were poor farmers, the subscription was slow and difficult, but all the more praiseworthy. The College's contribution to the lift of Cobourg and Ontario would require volumes. The first female graduates, the first medical degrees and the first science building must stand part for the whole. The image of a young Hart Massey, founder of the dynasty, here receiving his first formal schooling in return for splitting firewood, may serve as a picture of its goals in action. Many of the present College's traditions still hark back to Cobourg days, including Acta Victoriana (Canada's oldest literary review), the annual Bob sketch (named for a beloved Cobourg custodian) and the newspaper The Strand (named for Cobourg's beach).


On the west side of Victoria College at the NW corner of UNIVERSITY and JOHN STS. stands the 1857 home of William Hitchens, "GIRTON COTTAGE". Note the beautiful fence, though it is a later addition. Going north on JOHN ST. you will notice a quite spectacular "Second Empire" style house on the E. The style is recognizable by the sloping "mansard" roof. This 1874 building was the home of William Hargraft, a leading merchant involved in the handling of grain and coal. Hargraft, who was mayor of Cobourg and also a member of the provincial parliament, built a grain elevator near the harbour, equipped with the latest gas powered lift. He may also have started the importation of coal from Rochester. Proceed north to SPENCER ST., then turn left to #18, where stands John Spencer's house "THE POPLARS". This "regency cottage" of 1827 was recently restored as Cobourg's oldest existing dwelling. (Now office space). It has been home to three

of Cobourg's most famous families, the Spencers, Beattys and Daintrys. The bow windows are rare, for Canada, and the door is original.

From here proceed west to DIVISION ST. and go south to Site 4 at CHAPEL ST. Along the way you will pass the WOODLAWN TERRACE INN. This was the 1835 home of Ebenezer Perry, and his son Charles. Ebenezer was a very prominent Cobourg merchant, who arrived in town in about 1815. In 1813 he is said to have fought with the British forces at the battle of Lake Erie, which his cousin Oliver Perry won for the Americans. Perry bought most of the land south of KING around the harbour (hence Perry's Common in the park). He was the first head of the Cobourg Police Board (see Site 7), a member of parliament and finally a Senator in the Dominion of Canada. His brother was a famous early supporter of Reform in Upper Canada, after whom Port Perry is named. Perry was also an early owner of the Mill on ELGIN ST. The architectural guide calls this house "an outstanding example of Regency taste with its contrasting window sizes...low hip roof and tall chimneys." Note, also, the door. It is now an elegant restaurant and Inn.

ST. MICHAEL'S CHURCH, at the corner of DIVISION and UNIVERSITY is the centre of Catholic life in Cobourg, the church itself replacing an earlier church on WILLIAM ST. in 1896. There are several plaques which give details of the different buildings clustered around the main church on WILLIAM ST. in 1896. There are several plaques which give details of the different buildings clustered around the main church, rectory and school. The rectory is scheduled for demolition (as of May 1998), On JAMES ST. is a plaque to the Sister of St. Joseph.

(BOX INSERT) The catholic presence in Cobourg is curiously muted in the Upper Canada years. This is probably due to the fact that Cobourg was so influential in helping to establish the heavily Irish settlements in the "back" townships near Peterborough. Throughout



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municipal and provincial politics in the Upper Canada period. Briefly arrested in the terror after the Rebellion of 1837 he served in the provincial Assembly and on council. (Now a dentist's office, 297 DIVISION).

(BOX INSERT) The Methodists were the first to organize religious worship in Cobourg. The earliest settlers were ministered to by itinerant Methodist preachers from the U.S., beginning as early as 1808. A branch of the Smith's Creek (Port Hope) circuit was organized very early around the hamlet of Hull's Corners, now the part of Cobourg south of the intersection of DIVISION ST. and the 401. (A small, partly hidden cemetery marks the spot.)

(Directions: Proceed down DIVISION to KING ST. Note the stone lions on the DOSS store.)

CUSTOM HOUSE AND WHARF

the first half of the nineteenth century, Cobourg served as an entry port for immigrants, at first retired Army and Navy officers like the Boswells and the Stricklands and Traills of literary fame, but after 1820 large numbers of Catholic Irish were brought, in organized groups, through Cobourg to settle on the inland lakes. By mid-century, of course, Catholics became as prominent in Cobourg as other groups. The first Catholic church was established in the 1840's on WILLIAM ST., on land donated by Sheriff Ruttan.

At the SE corner of JAMES and DIVISION stands the house of John McCarty, built between 1835-40. John McCarty was a storekeeper, whose father, some think, was killed as a martyr to the Methodist Church in early Kingston. John himself was prominent in Church and College functions, was a strong reformer, and was reputed to be the strongest man in the county.

Site 4: TRINITY CHURCH

The first downtown Methodist church was built on this site in 1824. It stood beside the Common District Schoolhouse, a grammar school which also served as a Community Hall and which stood opposite the entrance to COVERT ST. Many of the most important decisions in the town's early life were debated there. The present church was built by William Storm in 1852 and was greatly remodelled in 1900-01. It was renamed after the church union produced the United Church in the 1920's. THE CHAPEL, (now under renovation - May 1998) on the north side of CHAPEL ST., originally the Sunday School and College Chapel, served as the town's library from 1969 to 1996. Opposite the entrance to CHAPEL ST. is the 1840's home (grey-green trim) of Dr. Gilchrist. He was a Methodist GP, and stands for the type of moderate Methodist Reformer so influential in

Site 5: KING - DIVISION

This is close to the site of Eliud Nickerson's 1798 homestead, and thus serves as one of the two major founding sites for Cobourg. The corner is graced with a wall-plaque on the NE corner, commemorating, oddly enough, his shed, which was used either as a school or a store or both. His actual house was some hundred or so yards to the west, on a small creek and on his neighbour's property. The creek still runs underneath KING ST. (the man-hole covers are in front of Quinte photo. The creek is visible both to the north and south of the built-up area). The original east-west trail which became KING ST., crossed the creek at a slight angle, due to the high bank on the west side, which angle is perpetuated in the present bend in Hwy. 2 at this point. To try to delineate all the buildings which have occupied this corner would be

CIRCA 1857



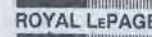
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pointless. For many years the Post Office held the SE. The SW corner was the site of Elijah Buck's tavern in 1806, which, for one memorable day until the sign was torn down, gave the village its first name "Buckville". A pre-1810 blacksmith, on the NW past the creek, completes the picture of the original downtown "core".

Cobourg's "Downtown" is, deservedly, regarded as one of the most beautifully preserved nineteenth century commercial districts in the province. Originally broken on the south side by three cross streets, it retains only two, SECOND and THIRD STS. as such, one to either side of Victoria Hall. The remains of FIRST ST. now form a small passageway beside the Dutch Oven Cafe. (Itself an important old building, long known as the "STONEHOUSE").

Along that street, in 1804, was established one of Cobourg's earliest industries, a distillery. Later, as a colliery importing coal from Rochester, the site remained a staple of Cobourg's economy until the last war. The "Downtown" has remained virtually unchanged since the 1800's. A good idea of its unity can be had from the entrance to that passageway. If you look from there to the west along the upper storey line of the north row of buildings, you will see a single small gable, above May's flowers. That gable originally framed the town clock, before Victoria Hall was built. Beebe's shoe store (south side half-way to Victoria Hall) preserves its original facade.

Directions: Walk down DIVISION to the main pier at its foot. The Pink building on the west side of DIVISION is the old Salvation Army building, now an experimental cyber-cafe.

Site 6: EAST PIER.

In 1828, local businessmen petitioned the Assembly at York for assistance in replacing the makeshift wharves - at which passing ships had often had to unload their deliveries of goods or passengers by row-boat - with a proper harbour. They received good wishes in abundance

and, let us say, gracious permission to raise their own money to go ahead with the project. This they did, and The Cobourg Harbour Co. was incorporated and began its operations in about 1830, starting with this pier. In 1833 they built a slipway for shipbuilding to the east of the pier, where the Steamer "Cobourg" was launched in May of 1833.

The harbour has been rebuilt, dredged and expanded many times and to suit many different businesses in the past century and a half. The first pier began near the entrance to the trailer park, extended 500 ft. into the lake and ended with a lighthouse not unlike the one today. To ensure payment of its tolls for use of the harbour, the harbour company built a warehouse-cum-Custom-house with an archway right over the road leading away from the pier, so they could block anyone entering or leaving before their goods were checked. This building can clearly be seen in most early paintings of Cobourg. Within ten years the West Pier was added, (approximately where the Marina pier is now) and the East Pier was extended to more than a thousand feet. The Cobourg and Peterborough Railway had its terminal at the harbour, with a station on the west side of DIVISION ST. beside the current unpaved esplanade, and with the tracks extending right on to the East Pier.

Once re-incorporated under the new municipal statutes of 1850, the town bought the harbour back from the company at, some said, ruinous expense. From the 1830's to mid-century and beyond, Cobourg was indeed a bustling harbour, but soon after that it became apparent that the harbour and rail network were not commensurate with the town's dreams of grandeur.

The railway across Rice Lake to Peterborough was Cobourg's most costly blunder. Soon, the Rice Lake Bridge had given way to the ice for good, the commerce of the west was not coming to Cobourg and the truncated railway was carrying only ore from the mines at Marmora for export to U.S. steel mills in Ohio. Cobourg's main imports became coal, for the new east-west railroads, and tourists.

For most of this century the harbour was, to our 2998 eyes, disfigured by giant piles of loose coal and the once ubiquitous oil tanks. Two cross-lake ferries, the "Ontario 1" & "2" from Rochester, finally ceased operation in the early 1950's. They docked at the pier near the Marina.

The harbour was redesigned for small craft in the early 1980's, and, though already counted one of the best on the lake, is still undergoing rejuvenation.

Cobourg Harbour is entirely artificial. The bay formed by Midtown Creek was never much more than a swampy inlet (though the creek itself was substantial enough to provide salmon for the table). The Cobourg business community quickly saw that great prosperity could be derived from the harbour's becoming the major entre-pot for trade between the back country on the Trent waterway and the St. Lawrence. Within a very short time of its commencing operations, the Harbour Co. was engaged in a fierce struggle for control of the town's business with the local merchants, since it controlled virtually the whole of the town's business. As the Trent River below Rice Lake was notoriously difficult to improve for navigation, it was thought that a road or, later, rail connection between Cobourg and Rice Lake - only thirteen miles to the north - would draw to Cobourg all the traffic coming down from Peterborough and beyond. With the development of the railroad, Cobourg began to see its hinterland as encompassing all the territory potentially served by the Trent-Severn canal, including Georgian Bay and the far west. In the context of the 1830's and 40's, this was visionary thinking, which reflects very highly on the sense of purpose with which Cobourg has long been identified. That the railways themselves would obviate any need for the Trent-Severn system was not foreseen.

Directions: Follow the esplanade beside the harbour toward the marina. Half-way along you will find Midtown Creek, still emptying into the harbour (near the Life-Ring stand). North of the esplanade is the original railway land, scheduled for redevelopment. At the end of the harbour area, proceed up THIRD ST. to ALBERT ST. On the NE corner you will see the MARKET BUILDING - which looks like an old train station. Go to its east side. The FIRE-HALL and the back of VICTORIA HALL are to the north of you.

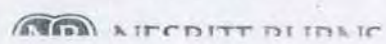


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Site 7: COBOURG MARKET.

From the MARKET BUILDING, one can see the principal elements which went to make up municipal Cobourg. Cobourg was made a "Police" village in about 1834. By this was meant a village in which an elected body, called a "Police", (after the Greek word for "city") had the authority to set rules for town life, as opposed to the laws which applied to any township. The rules mostly dealt with fire prevention, street use, noise and public morality (No bathing within 200 yards of private dwellings!), and market regulation.

On July 1st, 1837, the town was incorporated, and was thus empowered to raise taxes, undertake public works and borrow money. Oddly, to our eyes, incorporation was stridently opposed by many citizens who saw it as another grab for power on the part of the monied interests in town. One of the first acts of the new town was to institute a public market. The MARKET BUILDING behind VICTORIA HALL was completed in 1856, and is now used as a community centre, though the Saturday Farmers' Market continues to function around it nine months a year.

The current Jail, on the SW corner of ALBERT and THIRD STS. is quite recent and bears almost no historic connotations. Cobourg, has been the county town for Northumberland since about 1800. In that year the district court-house was moved to the little village of Amherst, now the section of Cobourg which surrounds Northumberland Mall, on HWY 2, heading west toward Port Hope. Amherst was united to Cobourg in 1834. The present County Hall and Court-house are still there, but little trace of the old village or buildings now remains. The jail was moved downtown in 1902.

The FIRE HALL, NE of the Market, was completed in 1876. Volunteer fire companies are attested as early as 1832. In later years Cobourg fire companies won prizes around North America for their turn-out in their bright uniforms and brass accoutrements.

A famous local story tells of a pair of enthusiastic rookie fire volunteers trying out the new pressurized hoses on a fire in the railway round-house, south of this spot. Aiming the hoses through two upstairs windows, the keen young heroes missed the blaze but swept each other off their respective ladders. The resulting fist-fight held the other volunteers up for a short while, after which the fire was put out by a more united effort.

VICTORIA HALL was completed in 1860 and opened by Edward the Prince of Wales, who later became Edward VII. Local legend has it that the ball-room floor was only completed at the last moment, and that the Prince and his party waited offshore till word could be shouted to them that the flooring of the ball-room was safe enough for the ball to go on as planned. It was built on a scale to suite Cobourg's dreams. Early visitors are said to have been so overwhelmed, they asked where the city was for which it was intended. The debt incurred wasn't fully retired until 1938. By the 1970's it was in so parlous a state that serious thought was given to tearing it down. To the town's great credit, a citizens' committee rescued the building and oversaw its restoration. Tours are given in summer and no visit to Cobourg would be complete without awarding it ample time for a visit on its own.

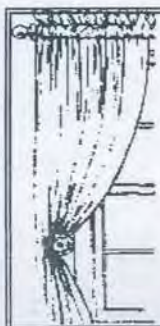
Directly west across THIRD ST. from the market stands the "HOMELIKE INN". This house was originally built in the 1840's, probably as a private home. It has a peculiar resonance for Cobourg history, however, in that it has been a hotel and popular tavern, under the same owners, since 1937. To a very great extent, Cobourg's early history revolved around hotels much like this one. The Cobourg Star of the 1830's abounds in notices that "Interested Citizens gathered at 'Strong's' or The Steamboat Hotel, to resolve the various problems of the day, or to launch new ventures. The railway, the Harbour and Town Incorporation

were all started in this way. A Chairman would be elected, with various resolutions then proposed and passed, whereupon a notice of the proceedings would appear in the next issue of the Star. Opposition to the Harbour and to Incorporation was expressed, though, in meetings at the School House.

Directions: Proceed along ALBERT ST. to the traffic light at HIBERNIA. At HIBERNIA and ALBERT, notice the grass covered passageway approaching the intersection from the SE corner. This is the route of the Cobourg and Peterborough Railway from the harbour. From here it led up the side of HIBERNIA and SPRING STS. - hence the width of these streets - and north out of town to Rice Lake. At HIBERNIA and KING - to the north - you will see the Armouries (1904). One street south of ALBERT is ORR ST., where the Legion Hall and, at its west end, the BARRACKS are located.

Site 8: THE BARRACKS.

Long considered the oldest building in Cobourg, this building of uncut stone, in very early style, is often thought to date from the War of 1812. Tunnels are popularly believed to connect it with the harbour or with buildings nearby. It was most likely the stable or malt-house for the brewery which James Calcutt built on this property in 1833-4, but whether built for that purpose or re-used from an earlier life, no one can say. (If it was the malt-house, then this is the building where the parishioners of St. Peter's held their one-time emergency service in 1854) The house to the south of the old barracks, is Calcutt's Home, "LAKEHURST". Calcutt fled political conflict in Ireland in 1832. A well-documented story recalls how one of his enemies from Ireland accidentally came to grief here in Cobourg, drowning off Calcutt's own beach. Be sure to take a minute to view this house from its south side. Cobourg did not have any significant role to play in 1812, and, since the Kingston Rd. did not go through town until after the war, it is difficult to imagine why



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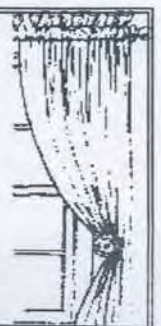
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the army would build here. Of course, many settlers volunteered for the militia, and some served with great distinction at Queenston and Lundy's Lane. During the Fenian Raids a local hotel is said to have been used as a barracks and hospital, and Cobourg troops garrisoned Fort York while the Toronto troops went to Niagara and the battle of Rideway. In every military action of the nineteenth century, a Cobourg contingent of volunteers took part. Cobourg's contribution to the First and Second World Wars came principally in the form of the Cobourg Heavy Artillery Battery, and the 40th. Northumberland Battalion of Infantry. This is best contemplated from the ARMOURIES (built in 1904 - now the Cobourg Police) on KING ST. at HIBERNIA ST., or at the cenotaph in VICTORIA PARK.

In the Rebellion of 1837, a large Cobourg contingent marched or rode to Toronto to help the government forces. It is thought that the majority of Cobourgites were on the side of moderate reform, who yet could not support the overthrow of the established government. A volunteer Rifle force later became the subject of a delightful memoir of the rebellion in the pages of the Cobourg Star. Also in the rebellion, two local men took part in the sinking of the "Caroline" at Niagara, which almost precipitated war with the U.S., and the elegant locally-built steamer "Cobourg" was armed with cannon and took an important part in the "Battle of the Windmill" at Prescott. In 1839, after the rebellion had almost completely petered out, a group of die-hards, in company with some thoroughly disaffected Cobourg people, carried out a raid on Cobourg with the intention of murdering several inhabitants (among them the two Boultons), robbing banks and spreading arson. The plot was discovered in time, and the men were tried and sentenced to fairly light prison terms. One of the conspirators was a local printer/editor named Sam Hart, a prominent reformer here and in Belleville, who shared with William Lyon

Mackenzie the distinction of having his press dumped in the lake. Another went on to an infamous career as the man who blew up the first Brock's Monument on Queenston Heights. Opposite LAKEHURST, on SYDENHAM ST. stood Cobourg's first navigation marker, a 7-storey Windmill, also burnt during a military scare, probably 1860.

Directions; Proceed along ALBERT ST. to the West. You may wish to do House Tour #3, on BAGOT ST., in which case you may wish to go south on DURHAM to the lake, turn west and approach BAGOT (one street west) from there. The BAGOT ST. tour will bring you out on ONTARIO ST. at ALBERT ST. ALBERT as it passes ONTARIO becomes TWEED ST. The Park, for the next Site, is SW of TWEED ST. It can also be reached from the beach, or from the streets leading west from ONTARIO ST. (Long known as "Lovers' Lane"). For the Creek mouth, take ONTARIO ST. south to the lake and follow the beach west to the mouth. Jones' house-site will be on the flat ground opposite.

If you go to the park directly, you will find yourself slightly upriver from the mouth. You might want to go to the far SE corner of the park. From there you will clearly see the original bank of the creek estuary (On your left) and the path which gives an alternate route to the creek mouth. It sounds confusing but it's not. All the routes are delightful. Head south-west and they all come out roughly in the same place and it all adds to Cobourg's odd small town/big-town feel.

Site 9: PEACE PARK/ CREEK MOUTH.

Elias Jones probably built his cabin on the west bank at the mouth of this creek as early as 1796. We know he petitioned the Assembly for the land in 1797, and may have been staking a claim to have brought in settlers. This would have entitled him to extra land. He operated a store here for the early settlers, landing goods directly on the beach or, in good weather, in the estuary. This makes this spot the other, rival, claim to be the foundation-site for Cobourg. Early roads being what they were, all finished goods and luxury items would have been brought in by schooner and off-loaded by small boats. The creek was much more substantial in Jones' day. As late as mid-century we have paintings apparently showing sail-boats in the creek estuary. As the forest receded before the axe, less water was held back by the ground cover and the swift spring run-off caused the banks to erode away and the creeks to shrink to their present size all along the lake. After a few years Jones abandoned his store, its place being overtaken by the stores and wharves at the foot of



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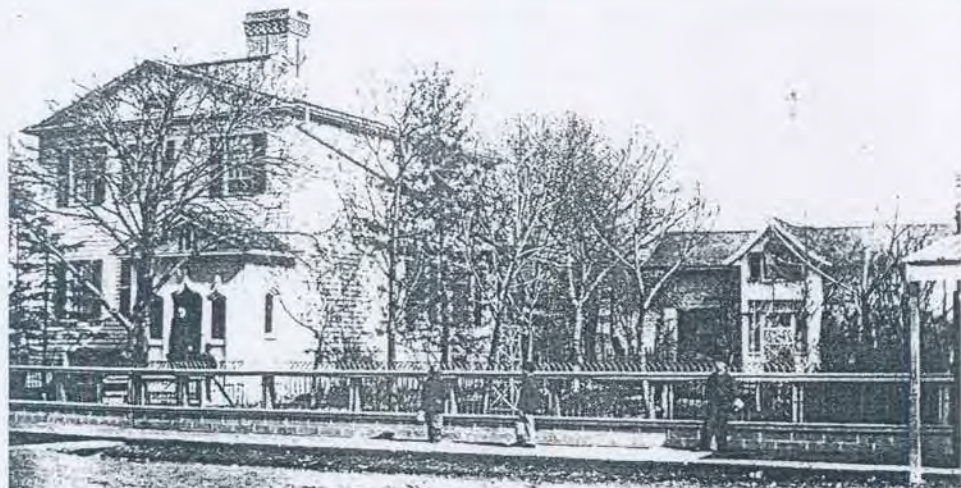
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CLENCH HOUSE ON KING STREET

DIVISION ST. He took up farming west of Cobourg toward Port Hope and died in the 1830's leaving several daughters and a rich legacy.

There was a chronic shortage of money in the infant province, so most settlers relied on credit with a storekeeper like Jones, who would credit their purchases against their annual harvest. The harvest consisted of wheat, grown, in the early years, in rows placed between the stumps of the trees they had cleared away. (Stumps took upwards of seven years to rot away.) This export would be supplemented by lime, burnt from limestone from the hills north of town, lumber, potash made from the debris from clearing, maple sugar and sometimes game and local salmon for the table in York. Perhaps a very few furs. Jones' credit line would stretch to York, Montreal and eventually England, where the settlers' orders would finally be placed and offset against what the agents - usually Montreal merchants - could get for the unfinished products from Upper Canada. Little money ever found its way back to Cobourg and what did

was usually drained away quickly to the larger towns. For this reason the settlers had to be self-sufficient in almost everything. Flax grew well in this area, so it immediately became the staple for all clothing, the so-called "Canadian Grey" which was as distinctive as Confederate "Butternut". This credit system coloured all of Cobourg's and the province's later politics, with the merchant, developer and farmer often at odds over the best way to develop the region's resources. The only people with real money back then worked for the government.

Directions; From the creek mouth take CEDARMERE, the first exit from the beach and then follow the small path at the west end of TAY which leads into the park. From the park, take the foot-bridge over the creek which leads to TREMAINE CRESC. Walk west over the hill to the parkette overlooking the lake just past the retreat. (The extensive grounds by the Lake).

Site 10; WELLER'S / FACTORY HILL.

This hill matches Boulton's Hill on the east of town. To the west is MONK'S COVE, where a persistent legend places buried treasure left behind by a British warship fleeing the Americans in the War of 1812. This was once a beautiful beach, much beloved of Cobourg residents before the last war, but denuded of gravel for the building of the 401, and eroded away. On the western horizon, a mile from shore, is St. Peter's light, once a substantial island with a lighthouse, now a lighted marker.

The house to the SE, known as "THE HILL", was the home of William Weller, the "Stage-Coach King", who operated the principal transportation network between Toronto and Montreal in the 1830's to 1860's. In one famous incident he pulled off a thirty-six hour, Toronto-Montreal commute for the Governor-General, Lord Sydenham, in order for the governor to make a political appointment and for William to win a bet. He also operated north to Peterborough and actively supported Cobourg's aspirations to growth in the Trent system and railroad schemes.

His house, once the summer home of American President Ulysses. S. Grant's daughter, has been a retreat for most of the last century operated by the Sisters of St. Joseph. (See the plaque at St. Michael's Church).

Directions; Proceed up TREMAINE ST. - back down the hill to the NE - to KING. Along the way you will pass the MACKECHNIE HOUSE B&B, (173 TREMAINE) the house of Stuart Mackechnie who owned and built the Ontario Woolen Mills, (on the site of the low factory-like buildings on the bank toward the river). You will also pass the COBOURG STAR building. The Cobourg Star was founded in Jan. 1831. It may be Ontario's oldest local newspaper still functioning. It is now a daily. An almost complete record of its weekly issues is housed in the Library. At KING ST. walk east to the bridge.

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Site II: FACTORY CREEK MILLS.

Elias Jones was the first to dam the creek, possibly as early as 1801-2. (The first mill between Kingston and Toronto was the 1800 one at Port Hope). He realized that the completely unfinished products of the district could not compete, given the high cost of shipping from a place in Cobourg, so he built a mill, first for grinding flour, then, almost immediately after, for sawing lumber. The first mill seems to have stood about 200 feet upstream from the KING ST. BRIDGE, where the weir is now.

His simultaneous creation of a distillery as well is not surprising. Yes, they drank far more than we would consider safe nowadays (in local hotels whiskey was free at breakfast as a matter of course), but a more important clue can be taken from the lament of one farmer that, due to poor shipping opportunities, he was forced to feed his wheat to his cattle so as not to waste it. Cattle usually fed free-range in those days, usually on marsh plants. Unshipped wheat raise a considerable profit if distilled into whiskey, as that was more portable and would not spoil, so as soon as you had a mill you built a distillery as well.

These mills, then, represent Cobourg's first industry and point the way to its later development as a commercial entrepot for the region. Soon there were mills all the way up the river, the principal ones being the Ontario Woolen Mills (just downstream from Jones and fed by feeder from it) another just west of WILLIAM ST. which created a mill-pond on the present site of ROTARY PARK (east side of WILLIAM ST. below the court-house) PERRY'S/PRATT'S at ELGIN and ONTARIO (now beautifully restored as The Mill golf-course/restaurant) and WHITE'S (now disappeared). A famous mill on this watercourse can also be seen in the town of BALTIMORE north of Cobourg on HWY. 45.

On May 14th, 1864, the spring run-off overwhelmed the dam at Perry's or Pratt's Mill (now the golf-course restaurant at ELGIN ST.). The surge of water broke

the dams in turn, at each of the mills then on the creek downstream of Perry's, uprooting trees along the banks, destroying the millworks and sweeping workmen out to the lake. Three men died as a result, some with conspicuous heroism as they struggled to rescue fellow workers. The slick of mud and wreckage was visible for a mile out into the lake.

One of the results of the shortage of money was that potential settlers were encouraged to purchase land with very small down payments. They would buy the land and strip it of trees to be sold as lumber for cash. Often they would then use the cash to buy a complete farm elsewhere, leaving the land stripped bare and uncultivated so that the rains would create the terrible erosion that ultimately destroyed many of the creeks and rivers.

Coming when it did, that flood could almost serve to symbolize the collapse of Cobourg's Railroad were seen to be failing, the Rice Lake bridge had been weakened by the ice again, the harbour was unnaturally quiet as exports began to slip off to Toronto harbour or rattle

through town on the Grand Trunk railway to Montreal. Increasingly the harbour was choked with coal, dumped there for the trains that would take Cobourg's business elsewhere. The rivers and the lake just didn't seem to have delivered on the earlier promise. Not yet foreseen was a completely new use for the lake and Northumberland's natural beauty. As the century drew on, more of the busy people passing through would choose to come back for a visit, to stay in one of those numerous hotels, to build a country home near the lake, or just to relax in the now quiet town. I think this is where we came in.

Directions: The Cobourg Trail leads NE from the bridge along the creek bank. Be warned, it is a bit rough in spots, but it does go all the way up to the Mill on ELGIN ST., though sometimes you would be wise to use road access to get around some parts. Past HWY. 2, or WILLIAM ST., through ROTARY PARK to ELGIN ST. it is fairly well marked.

You might, instead, wish to take House Tour #4 back along KING ST. which takes you back to the downtown.



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HOUSE TOUR 1: QUEEN ST./ KING ST.

On the NW corner of HENRY ST. at QUEEN, we see the perfectly Victorian DOOLEY HOUSE. A notice in the gossip column of the Cobourg World of Nov. 1874 notes that Mrs. Dooley has "just completed her beautiful home on Henry St." Mrs. Dooley was the sister of Andrew Hewson, whom we shall meet later, and she and her brother operated a dry-goods store on King St. for half a century.

The apartments on the NE corner replace the (now demolished) HEATHCOTE, home of D'Arcy Boulton's mother-in-law, Mrs. Heath. Mrs. Heath's husband Col. Heath, died in the Deccan War in India in 1819. Of Heathcote only one entrance pillar remains, on the south side of KING. (You can't see it from here).

On the SW corner, below Mrs. Dooley's, is GLEBELAWN, built in 1854 by Dr. James Austin. Its name preserves the fact that this was Glebe land owned by St. Peter's Church. The two western gables were added in 1871. Dr. Austin was a much-loved GP, known for rarely charging his poorer patients. On the north side of QUEEN, west of HENRY one can see an attractive set of stables, in white stucco with brown trim, though to which house they belonged is now uncertain. At GREEN and QUEEN STS. we have, on the SE the original (1841) parochial school and Anglican Diocesan Theological Seminary (HASKELL HOUSE). The building, in a rare Ontario Tudor Style, has been much added to, but the original may have been designed by Henry Bower Lane, the putative designer of Osgoode Hall in Toronto, who was a good friend of the Boultons. The instigator of the school was Alexander Bethune, the later Bishop of Toronto. The school was incorporated in Trinity College, Toronto in 1852.

On the SW is the PEPPER/CORNELL House. The actress Katherine Cornell grew up here. The house

dates from 1873, with extensive additions in 1900. Just up GREEN toward KING on the east side is a large house (now apts. with a brown roof) known as HATFIELD HALL. This house was built in 1879 by William Chambliss, the owner of the elegant Arlington Hotel. He lost it to Col. Cornell, down the street, in a poker game, and Katherine was married here. Chambliss named it Hadfield Hurst, after his wife's family, but it later became a boarding school for girls, whence the name was changed again to Hatfield Hall.

As we move along QUEEN toward CHURCH ST. and the park, note the cottage at #124. For at CHURCH ST. and QUEEN, we come to a beautifully restored Victorian summer cottage named VICTORIA COTTAGE, on the SE corner. This was one of two, named Victoria and Albert, built by William Beer in 1887. ALBERT was moved, in 1905, around the corner where it still stands at 124 Queen.

Moving north on Church St. we come to Cobourg's best example of an Italianate Style at #202, MULHOLLAND HOUSE (1858). Robert Mulholland was a local merchant who dabbled in politics. During an election he once claimed only that he was "born in Canada, an Irishman, a farmer's son, a Presbyterian, once PostMaster in Roseneath, presented St. Andrew's Church with a bell." His opponent accused him of trying to buy the election with that bell. At the top of CHURCH ST. (at KING) a new condominium has gone up on the site of one of Cobourg's oldest buildings, which burned down in 1992. This was the MINAKER HOUSE, part of which may, some claim, even have been built by Cobourg's first settler Eliud Nickerson himself. It certainly was the site of Squire Henry's bank, which the raiders of 1839 wished to rob before setting fire to the town as part of their planned uprising. Many feel that the new building mars the original streetscape of CHURCH ST.

From here one can cross to ST. PETER'S CHURCH, Site 2.

HOUSE TOUR 2:

Tour 1. Begin at ST. PETER'S RECTORY. As noted in the history tour, the white building (177 KING c. 1874) directly across KING ST., is now the original Cobourg Collegiate Institute. One of the most beautiful groups of houses in Cobourg is along this stretch of KING on the north side. There is not much known about them, or their owners. You may wish to note the rare galvanized metal roof on the Osler House at 130 KING. #160 bears the name "NEW HALL", possibly because it is a relative new-comer, built in 1913. The TOWNSEND HOUSE, at 170, was dated to 1850 by the Canadian Registry of Historic Houses, but recent research indicates that parts of it are much older. #188, (just past WALTON ST.) a favourite of mine, is a pre-1858 Ontario Vernacular Cottage.

Moving up WALTON ST. we note the JAMES FARRY house at #257, dating from 1887. A fine "Regency" house at #262, was once owned by Henry Meredith, who played a valiant role in the Cobourg Rifles' expedition to Toronto in 1837. The house is later.

At CHAPEL ST. turn east and head for HENRY ST. On the south side of CHAPEL, starting from the corner, you will see a row of similar houses of a fairly simple design. These should not be ignored. Reuben Jackson was a bricklayer who arrived in Cobourg near the turn of this century. Determined to find a way to house more working people, Jackson designed these cost-effective, excellent homes. They are "home-grown", distinct to Cobourg, and Jackson built seventy-one of them over the next fifty years. At every turn, while walking through Cobourg, it is worth looking out for "JACKSON HOUSES".

Stopping at HENRY ST. glance south for a minute, past the TINNEY HOUSE on the SE corner, to #286, the PENGELLY HOUSE. The first Capt. Pengelly, was a Royal Navy officer who fought as a midshipman at the battle of Trafalgar. He settled with his young wife, Harriet Brock Pengelly, the niece of Sir Isaac Brock, in 1832 near Rice Lake. His wife died in

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Upper Canada, and Pengelly fled to England. He returned permanently to UC after a short stay at home, and though he made his fortune here and remarried he never forgave the province for the loss of his wife. His sons were successful in business and as artisans. Henry Pengelly, who built this house in 1878, was a blacksmith by trade, though he also was on the town council and was a prominent figure in the town's fire brigades. He is also memorialized in a Cobourg retrospective of 1898 as a member of the Board of Health.

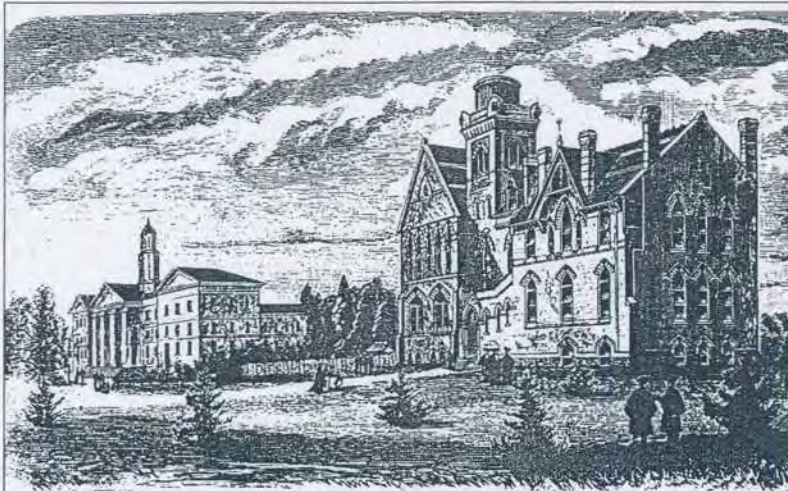
The house at 308 Henry, on the NE corner, which faces onto Chapel St. was built by George Boulton's son Trevor for Rev. J.M.W.R. Beck, who became rector of the Anglican Church in Peterborough. Beck was born in Schenectady NY in 1828. In 1840 his mother Anna Maria Walton, married George Boulton, both for a second marriage. The young Beck, in about 1854, married Boulton's daughter from his previous marriage, Georgiana. Boulton settled them in this house. Beck was a favourite of Boulton's, who arranged for him to take his divinity degree under the direction of Bishop Strachan in Toronto. Beck then received the curacy of St. John's Church in Peterborough, where he established another beautiful property, keeping this one for rental income. Relations eventually soured between Boultons and Becks. Anna Marie died, as did Georgiana. Beck married his mother's maid, Margaret, with whom he may have been in love all along. soon, all the properties were in jeopardy, Boulton claiming that Beck lived beyond his means, Beck claiming that Boulton had injudiciously mortgaged everything in sight to support ruinous railroad schemes and Beck's parishioners whispering that Beck was "hocking the family silver" to stay afloat, not to mention "marrying his cook". We do

not know the outcome of this unhappy family dispute, so best draw a veil over the details.

HEWSON HOUSE, at 332 Henry, SE corner of James, was built in 1859 by Andrew Hewson, who, with his sister Mrs. Dooley, operated a very successful dry-

rear of the house survives of the original, but no matter. The result is so delightful, one could spend a fair time simply trying to count the number of balconies and gables.

Moving along JAMES ST. to the west, it is worth pausing as you pass WALTON to examine the impressive house at 356 WALTON, just north of JAMES on the E. As anyone can tell, this house used to front on to JAMES ST. but has now been given a WALTON address, due to the rather odd severance of the front lawn. The house was built by Nathaniel Burwash, principal and Chancellor of Victoria College, and one of the foremost educators of the turn of the century. He it was who oversaw the relocation of "Vic" to Toronto in 1893. He is remembered in BURWASH HALL, the name given to the Dining Hall of Victoria College in Toronto, which has lent its name to the whole residence complex on Queen's Park.



VICTORIA COLLEGE AND FARADAY HALL

goods store in downtown Cobourg for fifty years. Andrew Hewson Jr. was the local Postmaster and Antiquarian who, in 1930, carried on a most fortunate correspondence with E. C. Guillet, another favourite son who became the premier historian of early Ontario. Much of Cobourg's early history was rescued by this cooperation. A descendant has now restored the house and furnished it with period furniture.

On the NW corner (349 HENRY at JAMES) is a delightful house in a "nameless ornamental" style that seems to bear only the stamp of its most prolific builder, Sarah Botthwell of Jersey City NJ, who built the house in 1864, then extensively rebuilt it in 1897. Only the

first arrived in Cobourg in 1832. Guillet took his degree at Toronto, with an honorary LL.D. from Queen's of which he was very proud. In his obituary, Robertson Davies remarked that Guillet left a treasure trove of historical documentation about Ontario which writers will cull for material for years to come. There is a large collection of Guillet's books in the Cobourg Library, including Cobourg 1798-1948, without doubt the best history of Cobourg yet written.

At COLLEGE ST. one can move on to VICTORIA COLLEGE at the top of the hill (Site 3).




ONE OF COBOURG'S OLDEST BUILDINGS 35 King St. East is 161 years old this year

This building was built in 1837 for William Gravely, a druggist, and shared with Dr. F. G. Callender, a dentist, one of only five in Upper Canada at the time. Gravely's son, J. Vance Gravely, later became mayor of Cobourg from 1880 to 1885. The building was sold in 1851 to J. Vance Boswell, gentleman merchant. The Boswells were a prominent Cobourg family who owned a distillery. His son, Arthur Boswell, later moved to Toronto and became mayor of Toronto in 1883.

The Crowe family occupied this building from 1927 until 1970 as Slumber Inn. It was also known as the Crowe's Nest, a Home Away from Home. The front exterior of the building remains unchanged from 1837; original glass, storm windows, wooden shakes, pine verandah and floor.

James W. Gordon purchased the building in 1970 and moved his General Insurance Business to this location. The Insurance Agency was originally begun by James F. McCullagh in 1921 and continued by his son Gordon until 1966.



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HOUSE TOUR 3

BAGOT ST.

On one of the earliest maps of Cobourg, that of Sir Sandford Fleming, drawn up in 1847 at the request of the Board of Police, there is a small gathering of houses at the foot of BAGOT ST. This seems to have been something of a small fishing community, with some local shopkeepers mixed in. Something of this character is preserved in the modern BAGOT ST. The south end of the street, with its entrance to the beach, has still that semi-coastal, semi-urban quality which must have pervaded Cobourg through much of its early history. If possible, BAGOT ST. should be approached by walking up from the beach. (All the streets in this end of town have beach access)

#99, was one of a number of houses built by two sailor brothers named Frederick and Martin Jex. It has been much added-to, and is rather grand, now, for its humble beginnings.

#100 was built by a local bricklayer named Henry Hoskins.

#106 is one of the more extraordinary examples of the "Greek Revival Style", and is referred to as the "FLOYD HOUSE". The doorway is particularly to be remarked upon.

#131 is curious for the placing of its windows. An Act of 1811 declared that houses were assessed for taxes on the number of storeys and that the number of storeys was calculated by the show of windows toward the street. Jeremiah and John Lucy built this house with the second storey windows facing away from the street so the taxes would come out right. The owner, in the 1980's, claimed that he found a cache of half-empty bottles in the basement, with whiskey and wine still in them, along with a prescription for them filled out by Dr. Ivey, the turn-of-the-century doctor who spurred the creation of the present hospital.

#163, at the corner of SYDENHAM was built in 1873 by Thomas Gillbard, a very successful clothier, who sold his business to his partner and clerk, Mr. Clarke, of the present Clarke retail family, whose stores are Cobourg-



ROOF TOPS

famous. He then devoted his life to education and politics. He was mayor at least once and the first elementary school was renamed for him in 1968.

#168-70 is "BAGOT ST. SCHOOL", built in 1870. Originally a one-room schoolhouse it was greatly expanded before being sold in 1902.

The Cobourg Sentinel, in 1875, announced in its gossip column, that the local builder John Thompson had just completed his "French Villa Style" house at 198 BAGOT. (NE Corner ALBERT ST.). He would later receive the contract to build Faraday Hall for Victoria College, the first building in North America ever designed specifically for science classes. Back on ALBERT ST., one notes the row of "Jackson Houses" on the north side just before the Library. The two very beautiful houses facing each other at the SW and SE corner of ALBERT and ONTARIO STS. are actually fairly recent by Cobourg standards.

The large white house on the W side and to the S. #163 ONTARIO ST. is possibly a union of two houses, both built by the Burnet Family. They were local builders who moved to Cobourg in the 1830's, and are responsible for a number of houses in this end of town. They also were the ones contracted for the construction of Victoria Hall. At the bottom of ONTARIO ST. is Illahce Lodge, built in 1878 for William Riddell, the first recipient of a Bachelor of Science degree from Victoria College, later a lawyer, Supreme Court of Ontario Judge and noted early Antiquarian.

HOUSE TOUR 4

King St. W.

If you do not choose to follow the Cobourg Trail along the creek, the walk back along KING ST. W. takes you past some very pleasant nineteenth century houses. But, even if you don't intend to follow the creek, go part way up the east bank on the pathway, in order to see the view of the JOHN ROUTH House at 399 KING, (South side of KING west of the creek). Routh had a "Quick-Lunch Diner", in 1893, on KING ST. E., three doors east from the Post Office, and built this house in 1885. Moving east from the creek, at #375 is a house built in 1848-9 by Francis Burnet. Burnet was a carpenter/builder who came to Cobourg in the 1830's, and whose family business did the construction work on Victoria Hall. The efforts to pay off the Burnet family for that work caused the town considerable embarrassment.

The Cobourg Sentinel of Sept. 1872 carried a notice that Thomas Greenwood had finished his attractive house at 368 KING W. (northside KING).

#327 has what is called a "cross and hible" door. It is difficult to see from the N side. Apparently, the cross is formed "between the upper four panels, and the wide stile across the centre of the door is supposed to separate the old testament from the new."

John Field built #323 in 1846. He was a prominent merchant with a dry-goods store on the site of Victoria Hall.

#317 was owned by John Philp, who may be the same Philp as owned the HOMELIKE INN on Third St.

#295 is the only building in Cobourg made of cut stone and was built in 1847-8 by Alexander Sutherland.

#276 (north side) is an excellent example of an "Ontario Regency Cottage" built in 1857 by Nathan Nichols and graced with a "nun's coil gable", so-named after the shape of the windows. This house is particularly suited to a deep snowfall and Christmas lights.

East of the intersection, on the north side at #230, you



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P.17

HOUSE TOUR 5

George St.

Most Cobourg people unconsciously think that GEORGE ST. must stand for one of Cobourg's first two kings, but it actually commemorates George Strong who owned the first hotel on the NW corner of GEORGE and KING. This site, long known as the site of the British Hotel, is now a tastefully renovated Trust Co.

GEORGE ST.'s place in Cobourg history begins, for me, with Frances Stewart, who emigrated from England in 1823. Her husband had gone ahead, via Cobourg, to examine their homestead near Peterborough while Frances waited in York with her children. Anxious at not hearing from him, she sailed to Cobourg, to look for him. The schooner had to make two attempts before it could land passengers at the wharf. With her children in tow, she wandered up THIRD and GEORGE streets from the wharf as she put it, "starting into the faces of passers-by, looking for my husband." Suddenly a cart appeared with a bed and cushions on it, on which her husband lay propped, the whole being drawn along the street by the local Anglican minister, Rev. Macaulay, who had taken her husband in when he was laid low with fever. Typical Cobourg hospitality.

The south end of GEORGE ST. illustrates one of the more remarkable things about Cobourg. The most unprepossessing of shacks could easily be old enough to count as the "historic" section of many other Ontario towns. #262, for example, could be one of the oldest in town. Bill's Pizza has been much mauled by modernity, but retains its distinctive early nineteenth century shape.

Moving up to 332 GEORGE, one notes the Palladian-style window in the upper storey and the beautifully decorated door on the street facade.

#363 was built by John Cullingford, a druggist, in 1856 and was his place of business and home. It has been labelled "Ontario Vernacular Gothic Revival", which certainly covers it as far as I'm concerned. The wrought-iron fence has been carefully modelled to replicate a simple picket fence. One must pause at the corner of GEORGE and HAVELOCK to examine "DROMORE", the Dumble House, built in 1857. The extraordinary height of that steeply pitched main gable is, you may notice, enhanced by the way in which the main windows decrease in size as they go up, reinforcing the perspective. This is gothic with a vengeance, with quatre-foils and trefoils in the decoration, a three-potted chimney, 5 large brackets with an interwoven "D" motif, (either for Dromore or Dumble - the D's are tricky to see, but they are at the bottom of the brackets) and 9 round-windowed dormers. Dumble the elder came to Canada to settle



ALBERT COTTAGE

will find the postmaster Thomas Scott's house, the early parts of which date from the 1840's.

Across MATHEW ST. (still north side) is the 1853 home of William Dickson (#216) a music teacher and Choirmaster of the original Catholic Church on WILLIAM ST. This must have been a musical corner, since right next to it is the birthplace of Marie Dressler, whose father was the organist at St. Peter's Church. (see plaque). Dickson's home is of "Brunswick" construction, with wooden planking placed flush atop one another and the whole covered in stucco. The Dressler house - with its noteworthy door - is of a type of Ontario cottage peculiar to this area, if not to Cobourg alone. Another fine example of the type can be seen only a few stops round the corner to the north on the east side of MATHEW ST.

At 150 KING, at the corner of HALL ST., the Cobourg Book Room occupies a building about which the heritage people cannot agree. Is it "Loyalist"? One authority claims it is, citing the fanned transom, paired chimneys and the remains of a Gothic window on the west end (you can just make out the brickwork over the upper window). Does it really have a recessed main entrance? Is that brickwork on the facade intended to "make it look as though" the panels are recessed?

You be the judge.

You will see the need for a building conservation authority if you have followed us this far on our tour, and can still try to fathom the genius that went into building the additions onto 144 KING. Look up, and you can see the remains of a magnificent Second Empire roof, with ornamental dormers, now hidden by the excrecence that clutters the street.

Life isn't much improved by contemplating #134, the Freeman Clench House, once known as "THE CHESTNUTS", where the Canadian artist Paul Kane got his start painting portraits of Cobourg worthies. Part of this house was removed to Gore's Landing, the rest is a pizzeria.

Before the commercial district took its present shape, the Greek revival style was extremely popular in Cobourg. A very good example of this is to be seen at #101 KING ST. (south side - "Uniquely Yours Gifts"). Our ancestors would probably have seen this as more typical of Cobourg store-fronts than the current Victorian style that appears so well-established to us.

You are now downtown again and you may, if you wish, go to the corner of GEORGE and KING for House Tour #5.



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KING STREET IN 1830 - AS SKETCHED BY JAMES COCKBURN

the disputed border between New Brunswick and Maine, a problem left over from the American Revolution. His son John Henry Dumble became one of Cobourg's most prominent citizens, perhaps best remembered for uniting the Cobourg and Peterborough Railway with the Marmora Mining Co., probably the best thing that could have happened to Cobourg's railway dream. The NE corner of GEORGE and HAVELOCK is filled by the house occupied by R. D. Chatterton, the Cobourg Star's first editor. The Star office itself was a

shack (long gone) on GEORGE ST. opposite the entrance to ORANGE ST. (where the tanning salon is). The NW corner of Havelock and George shows us Dr. Hayden's house. (No longer on the corner, it is just past the obviously modern houses). Several attractive houses on HAVELOCK ST. W of GEORGE repay examination. On the N side, at the corner of BOND ST. (#80 HAVELOCK) stands the house built by William Bond in about 1875. Note the elaborately decorated quoins (corner-pieces) and

window lintels. Opposite at the Se corner #77, is the 1876 home of Ida Hayden, whose parents bought it to celebrate her marriage to Prof. Reynar of Victoria College. Above UNIVERSITY ST. we enter into Cobourg's nineteenth century industrial park. It is interesting to note the way in which the elegant homes of the "capitalists" (their own word) stayed juxtaposed to the businesses of which they were justly proud and to the railway.



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The great name in which this part of town is James Crossen. Starting as a poor immigrant in about 1840, working in a small foundry on the northwest corner of the block in which St. Peter's Church stands, Crossen worked his way up to part ownership of the firm. When the railway began searching for flat cars to haul lumber from the back country, Crossen retooled in order to provide them, dozens at a time, then went on to build passenger cars as well. By the 1870's he had moved to some still empty town lots which had been designated "Victoria Square", to the west of GEORGE and north of UNIVERSITY. Victoria Square was never to be developed as a square, being completely absorbed into the Crossen Car Works. The Car Works was one of Cobourg's most successful ventures, building sleeping and other railroad cars to rival the famous Pullman cars and, under Macdonald's National Policy, driving Pullman right out of the Canadian railway market. The decision by the major Canadian Railways to begin designing and building their own cars spelled the end for Crossen, which closed its doors just after the beginning of the century. Since then the works has mostly been a leather tannery.



FACTORY CREEK - MOUTH OF THE RIVER

If you walk along ALICE ST. (named after Victoria's daughter, and matched with PRINCESS on the north) you can get some idea of how the early plan for Victoria Square was originally conceived and then frozen in disarray by industrial necessity.



THE OLD ALBION HOTEL

At 449 GEORGE ST., we have William Crossen's House, "FAIRLAWN" built by his father James in the 1870's, with multiple renovations in 1895. The house is considered "Queen Anne Style". The window facing south, tucked into the verandah, is rounded, with a rounded panelling below, and the whole window ensemble, projecting about a foot from the wall of the back porch, is said to be the rear window of a Crossen railway car. The "bell-cast" roof at the back covers the billiard room.

The other Crossen home is that of father James Crossen at #465 GEORGE. CEDAR HEDGE dates from 1871. Note the barge board and "treillage" on the porch.

#475 also dates from 1871, and is in the Victorian Gothic Style, with classic revival bits to it. To the rear is an original carriage house with a pigeon loft.

Not to be missed at this end of GEORGE ST. is the carefully restored GRAND TRUNK RAILROAD STATION of 1911, restored in 1993 and now serving VIA rail.

A Find GEORGE ST. Story.

On a wintry day in the 1890's Dr. Ivey was walking near the railroad tracks near the north end of GEORGE ST., when he saw, to his horror, a young man lying by the tracks with his feet almost severed from his legs. he rushed the young man to the train station platform, where the station master refused them entrance, on the grounds that the young man must have been an intruder on the railroad's property. A young woman waiting for a train provided a cloak from her baggage, and Dr. Ivey left the man in her care while he went for help. He asked, at length, at the recently established home for the aged on JAMES ST., just south of UNIVERSITY, where the matron invited Ivey to bring the unfortunate victim to them, since the doctor had been so helpful to them in their efforts on behalf of Cobourg's needy. This moved Dr. Ivey to establish the first Emergency Room at the old folks home, and soon they were to experience the heart-rending pride which could accompany welcoming accident victims from as far as Port Hope and Colborne. This led directly to the founding of the present Cobourg Hospital (Northumberland Health Care Centre).



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