

A. Victoria Hall

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Cobourg Public Library

## Mystery Of Stone Head Cleared By E. Guillet

The popular rumor that the sculptured head over the doorway of Victoria Hall represents Dr. W. H. King who was hanged for murder while the Town Hall was being built, was itself laid to rest this week by Edwin C. Guillet, distinguished Ontario historian.

In a letter to Mayor Heenan, Mr. Guillet effectively clears up the mystery of the anonymous head. Through courtesy of the Mayor, Mr. Guillet's letter is detailed:

Archive of Ontario,  
Ontario Parliament Buildings,  
Toronto, December 14.

His Worship Mayor Heenan.  
Dear Mr. Heenan:

Please accept the thanks of my wife and myself for your courtesy in showing us the fine improvements in the Town Hall. As one who has written a great deal about the history of the town, I appreciate what is being done to preserve Victoria Hall, which is among the very finest in Canada.

I have compared the sculptur-

ed head over the doorway with those of ancient Greeks and Romans. It occurred to me when I was in your office that the greatest of Greek orators, Demosthenes (385-322 B.C.), would be the one most likely to be commemorated in a building given over to town government, and I find that it appears to be in fact his head.

Like you, I have heard for years the suggestion that the head represents Dr. W. H. King, who was hanged for murder while the Town Hall was being built. His portrait bears no relation whatever to the sculptured head, and there is as well not the remotest possibility that the mayor and councillors of that day would have authorized the placing of his likeness over the entrance.

Sincerely,

Edwin C. Guillet,

Research Historian, Archives of Ontario.

Mr. Guillet recently announced that he has written his last book. His output includes eight major works, the fruit of thirty years of toil. Some are very long, such as *Early Life in Upper Canada*, and *Toronto from Trading Post to Great City*.

Uniquely valuable is *The Lives and Times of the Patriots: Upper Canada Rebellion, 1837*. Among the most popular are the four volumes of *Pioneer Inns and Taverns*. To these he now adds a fifth, including British taverns with literary associations. It has 148 illustrations.

Collectors may be interested in *The Great Migration: The Atlantic Crossing by Sailing Ship Since 1770*. To celebrate its 25th anniversary the author is making available the last 160 copies of the first edition (New York, 1937) with the addition of a new jacket and a Supplement.