



John Lorn McDougall house

Historic house on Raglan St

by Harry Hinchley

The old John Lorn McDougall house once stood beside the building that is now St Joseph's Convent, which is visible behind the trees in the photo. In 1902, the Mackay family who had occupied the old house moved into the brick house that had just been built and the old house was taken down. It was hauled away to the Creamery Section and re-erected. (Where?)

John Lorn McDougall first took up land in Renfrew in 1837.

Two years later he bought another 200 acres on the east side of Raglan Street between what is now Low Square and Mutual Street. It was on this property that he built the house.

He also acquired several other lots, mostly west of Raglan Street. A good part of his land, on both sides of Raglan Street was later divided into town lots and now forms the McDougall Section that makes up a large portion of the centre of the town.

In 1857 he opened the McDougall Mill, the stone grist mill at the River which he had built on land that he had bought for the purpose. This mill was operated by a succession of owners as a grist mill and later a flour mill and finally as a warehouse for a woollen mill of M J O'Brien Limited. Michael J Murray, representing this company generously donated the building to the Town to be used as a museum which it now is.

John Lorn McDougall was a

prominent citizen in the early days. He was a member of Horton Council before Renfrew was incorporated and later he was a member of the village council. He was elected to Parliament in the late 1850's but he was given another appointment and never took his seat.

He had a large family the most prominent of whom being his son, also John Lorn McDougall, who was a businessman, lumberman, member of Parliament and for many years auditor-general of Canada. Another son was Sam McDougall who at one time was one of Renfrew's best known merchants.

John Lorn McDougall died in 1860 at the age of 60 years. He is buried in Thomsonville Cemetery.

Heritage building

Formerly Renfrew Hotel

Date of Survey:
November, 1976

Owner at time of survey:
Mr and Mrs John Pelky
268 Albert St N,
Renfrew, Ontario

Researched by:
Marjorie Lindsay (Mrs J E)
318 Albert Street N,
Renfrew, Ontario

Photographed by:
George Johnston
43 McLean Street,
Renfrew, Ontario

Developed by:
Dave Lorente, Jr
397 Charles Street,
Renfrew, Ontario

Location of building:
268 Albert Street North,
Part Lots 3 and 4, Plan 8, Block
V

Date of Construction:
Approximately 1852

Historical:

In the early 1850's, Orange Wright, son of Benjamin Wright who was a brother of Philemon

Wright, founder of Hull, Quebec, came to Renfrew with his wife, Lucy Wyman Wright, and sons, Orange and Marshall.

He built the first hotel north of the Bonnechere River called the Renfrew Hotel. It provided a large, comfortable, well equipped place to stay to farmers who came to the mills along the river.

It was the first stopping place on the famous Settlement Road, the Opeongo Road, after leaving Farrell's Landing on the Ottawa River (Grandview Lodge

today) at Castleford. Road construction began in 1854.

The many shantymen, farmers, pioneers who patronized the hotel enjoyed the hospitable attentions of host, Orange Wright and Mrs Wright's careful housekeeping.

Mr Wright died in 1863, but Mrs Wright and son, Orange operated the hotel until 1876. The hotel register for the period 1853-1876 has been carefully preserved by a Renfrew descendant, Mrs Wm Smart.

With the coming of the Railway in 1873 and declining use of the Opeongo Road the

hotel had fewer guests, eventually closed, and later, was sold as a private dwelling. Mr Orange Wright became Collector of Customs for Renfrew. He died in 1921.

At one time the property excluded the present Orange Lodge on Hincks Street which was a warehouse for the hotel and the property on the corner of Hincks and Albert Streets. Included in this survey is a National Archives photograph of the hotel as it appeared in 1863 from the B F Walling map of Renfrew and Lanark Counties.