



about Percy's Past

BY DR. R. STEPHENS

INDEPENDENT / MAR 31/98

This past fall, an enthusiastic group met and formed the Warkworth-Percy Historical Society. They decided to research and record the history of Warkworth-Percy and seek ways to publicize interesting anecdotes and stories from the past related to the area. This column, from the pen of Dr. Robert Stephens, is the first of what is hoped to be an interesting series of historical happenings.



The Barber of Norham

In the time of Henry the Eighth (1509-47), the practice of surgery was part of the barber's craft. At that time the company of barbers was incorporated with the company of surgeons - the company being known as the Barber-surgeons - with the limitation that the surgeons were not to shave or practice "barbery" and the barbers were to perform no higher surgical operation than blood-letting or tooth-draining. This continued until the time of George the Second (1727-60).

The signs of the profession - the pole of which the patient grasped and its spiral decoration in imitation of flowing blood - are still retained. It was also noted that in medieval times the barbers' shops, always notorious for gossip, were news-centers of the community. It seems little has changed in this regard!

On Thursday, December 2, 1897, the Warkworth Journal noted the following: *"The village of Norham can now boast of a tonsorial artist. Mr. W. Cronk has stuck out his pole of many colours and announces that he is a regular knight of the razor and shears. He is ready to amputate the social appendages of the Norham citizens in easy comfort."*

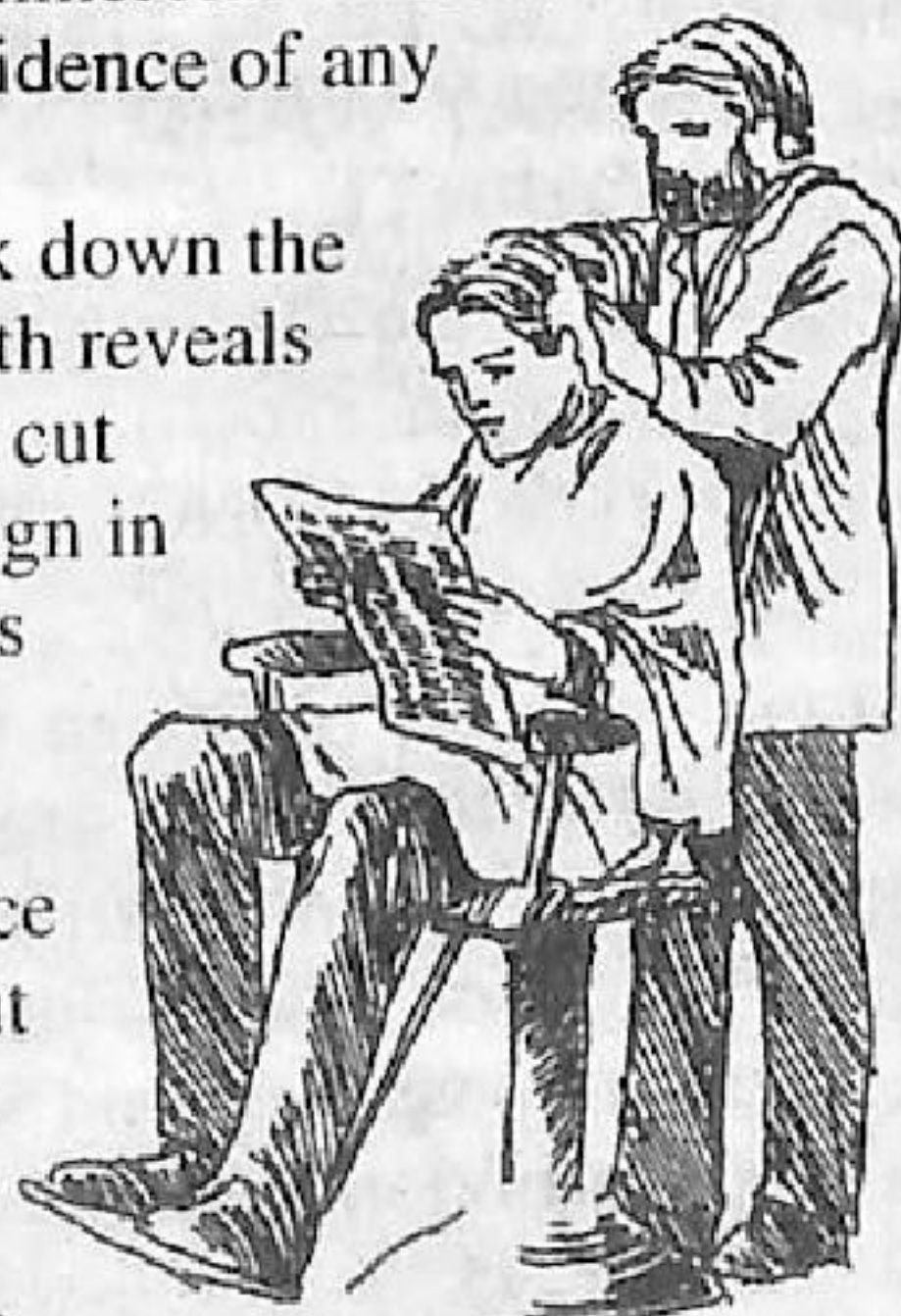
And you can be sure that the price was right!

How much? A shave and a haircut, two bits!

The tiny village of Norham lies a kilometre or two south of Warkworth. The corner grocery store, now closed, is the only visible remnant of a commercial district. There is certainly no evidence of any barber shop.

However, a short walk down the main street of Warkworth reveals two shops where hair is cut and trimmed. A small sign in the window of one notes "Haircut - \$2.00 off - regular \$12.00."

A very reasonable price by today's standards, but quite a change from the days of the barber of Norham, 100 years ago.



Readers can share their own memories of Warkworth and Percy with the author of this column by contacting Dr. Robert Stephens, RR4 Warkworth ON, K0K 3K0.

Castleton W.I. hears Habitat for Humanity

Lloyd Williams and Julius Vargas, volunteer members for non-Profit Habitat for Humanity, were guest speakers at the February Castleton Women's Institute meeting.

They explained and then showed us pictures of the volunteer men and women at work building homes for people who pay for their home by a modest, no-interest down payment and a pledge for 500 hours of volunteer work, or the remainder in cash.

The Habitat for Humanity House Rules and Aims are as follows:

- a modest 930-square-foot house for a family of three in a modest district;
- 36 volunteer workers aiming to complete the house between Monday morning and Friday afternoon;
- no bosses, just tradesmen, heading up the group;
- no stock piles of supplies;
- phone-in or demand partitions placed to suit the new owner.

The end result is a nice, neat grey-sided house and a group of congenial people pleased with their week's work, and new-found friends.

We were impressed, thanked the gentlemen with a small gift and a lovely lunch provided by our hostess Verna Rusk.

There were 11 members and one visitor joining our February 11 meeting for the Opening Ode, Mary Stewart Collection, and accept the Secretary and Treasurer reports.

Interesting highlights from the convenor's report:

- one Cuban girl who worked in Cobourg for three years, travelled to Oshawa and was granted Canadian citizenship;
- The Senate "considering" cancelling Andrew Thompson's pay cheque as he lives in Mexico and rarely attends the Senate. Why the consideration. Stop the pension.
- the lawsuit by Alaska

COLBOURNE CHRONICLE APRIL 9/98

about homes

against B.C. fishermen who blockaded a ferry is settled.

■ David Johnson, Ontario Minister of Education, has announced "in order for students to graduate in 1999 from high school, they will be required to complete 40 hours of volunteer work";

■ in order to increase trade between Canada, the U.S.A. and Mexico, Canadian National Railway has agreed to pay US\$4.3-billion for the Illinois Central connecting the Canadian east and west coasts with New Orleans and the Gulf of Mexico.

Castleton Women's Institute meets the second Wednesday of the month at 2 p.m. except through July and August.

A warm welcome to visitors and new members.

- Ruth Harren / RR#2 Warkworth