

Those Early Years

by Percy L. Climo

AARON GREELEY (continued)

It was July 1st, 1799, according to the minutes of council, with Elmsley, Grant, and Smith presiding, that the return of settlers in the townships of Hope, Hamilton, Haldimand, Cramahe and Percy as submitted by Augustus Jones, deputy surveyor, was reviewed. The board also considered counter-reports by Mr. Rogers, Greeley, etc. The board found conflicting evidence in the two submissions. "The Board meets with anything but additional proofs of fraud, duplicity, and unprincipled selfishness of the original nominees of those townships, who undertook to settle them with new inhabitants, but appear to have brought into them persons already settled in the Province, and in many instances have only borrowed their names."

This was a rather harsh judgment. This writer wonders whether proper and complete guidelines for township agents was ever laid down by the government. The whole business appears to have had the elements of confusion and misunderstandings throughout the years of agent settlement schemes.

The settlers who had completed their settlement duties would receive title to their lands. Others were given extended time to complete their obligations.

The mill cannot grind with water that has passed over the wheel. Time had run out for agent settlement schemes. Danforth, Greeley and Keeler busied themselves with other activities. By July 1, 1799, Danforth was already working on the construction of the road that bears his name.

According to the family story, AARON GREELEY was involved in building the first grist mills in Northumberland County, one at Presqu'ile (Brighton) and the other in Haldimand on Lot No. 14, Concession I, on the Shelter Valley creek. These facilities meant much to the settlers, who otherwise must go down the Bay of Quinte to Glenora in order to have their wheat ground into flour. Greeley also became active in bringing in provisions, supplies and general goods. In his business dealings he became involved with the Honourable Richard Cartwright.

Cartwright was born at Albany, N.Y. He came to Canada early with the U.E. Loyalists and set up a mercantile business, first in partnership, then on his own at Kingston. He was an astute man and kept his head well above the financial waters. His business expanded and prospered. He became a big importer and exporter of trade goods. He sold his goods wholesale to a wide and expanding group of customers. He was well established in the shipping trade. In 1792 he became a member of the Legislative Council of Upper Canada. Later he was appointed a judge in the Court of Common Pleas in his district. About 1815 he is reported to have owned 28,632 acres of land in Upper Canada.

In a letter dated 15 October, 1798, Cartwright writes to Greeley about a shipment of flour that had not arrived in Kingston. He also mentions that two notes issued by Greeley were overdue.

On September 7, 1799, Cartwright's account book lists three ledger pages of itemized wholesale goods sold to Aaron Greeley, indicating the latter may have had a general store in operation. Later other letters and accounts appear in the Cartwright books in business transactions with Aaron Greeley. It was through flour mills and perhaps a general store that Greeley assisted the settlers he had brought to this area.

The times were very difficult for the settlers and many had no money with which to purchase the necessities of life. The story of the Ash family of Hamilton township and printed earlier in "Those Early Years" points up this situation. Small merchants were obliged to extend credit to their customers. In those times, the small merchant often lost out and his supplier would take over assets and property.

Aaron Greeley had been granted his 1,200 acres of land. He took out lots in Hamilton and Haldimand townships, some were registered in his name. It appears he had to give up certain holdings in order to satisfy his creditors.

(to be continued)

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Around Castleton...

with
Joyce Buchegger
344-7870

Quote: "God made His abode with man that man might make his abode with God."

Joyful, all ye nations, rise, Join the triumph of the skies; With the angelic hosts proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem." — Wesley

As I sang carols in church yesterday and watched the children sweetly portray the Christmas story, I was thrilled to remember that just three weeks ago my husband and I had been in the actual spot where it had all begun.

In early December on a warm day in the mid 70's, we viewed the shepherd's field two miles east of Bethlehem where, according to Luke, "shepherds were abiding in the fields keeping watch o'er their flocks by night" when the Angel of the Lord gave them the wonderful news of the Saviour's birth. We entered a large cave where the shepherds would possibly have kept their sheep and found shelter in time of storm. Our guide wore the typical garb of long robe and cloth head covering. His simple house nearby was surrounded by flowering hibiscus, pointsettia bushes and bougainvillia.

Our tour group was then taken by bus to the town of Bethlehem to visit the site of Jesus birth which is now covered by a large beautiful Greek Orthodox church. This church is said to be the oldest church in Christendom and was built by Constantine's mother, Helena. Before entering, we stood aside as a bridal party left the church. A petite Arab Christian bride in a lovely white gown and her groom, followed by about 20 relatives and friends, entered waiting cars, two of which were beautifully decorated with real roses and carnations taped all over the hoods, rooves and backs. They were much prettier than our crepe-paper version but of course our climate isn't as

conducive to growing flowers in December as is Israel's.

At the front of the pillared church, two entrances lead down to the rectangular shaped cave, 35 feet by 10 feet in size where Jesus is believed to have been born. It is lit by 48 lamps and the primitive rock above the manger is black with the smoke of candles and lamps. A silver star on the floor, with a Latin inscription meaning "Here Christ was born", marks the spot of Christ's birth.

After meditating on what the birth of God's son has meant to mankind in general and to me in particular, we went outside into brilliant sunshine. On the street was stationed an army jeep with three soldiers guarding lest trouble break out. I thought back to the time Mary and Joseph had made the long journey from Nazareth in the north to Bethlehem that, among the crowds there to be taxed, there would have mingled Roman soldiers. Now instead of togas, swords and chariots, their modern-day counterparts had khakis, guns and jeeps. And they probably would have preferred to be elsewhere doing other things but because Christ's teachings have not been followed, their presence was necessary.

At this Christmas time I am thankful that Jesus came to earth and that in spite of wars and unrest, high prices and a shrinking dollar, and whatever our personal concerns may be, He gives inner peace to all who trust in Him.

Merry Christmas!

COLBORNE

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