The County of Hastings, the Township of Rawdon and the Moira River all derived their names from Francis Rawdon, who became Earl of Moira and Marquis of Hastings. He was a noted soldier and statesman and an official of the Colonial Office during the eighteenth century.

Hastings is the largest county in Southern Ontario. Most of the land in the six south townships is exceptionally fertile and is well suited to mixed farming, dairying and apple growing. At one time Belleville, the county town, was the main cheese shipping centre of Canada. It still holds a position of importance but more and more fluid milk is finding its way to Toronto and other cities.

There was not much livestock in Rawdon in the early times, for in 1849 the most on one farm was nineteen head (cattle horses and oxen).

In the early days of the county the whole area was covered with giant trees of both hard and soft wood. Much of the power used to saw the logs into lumber was provided by the Trent, the Moira and the Salmon Rivers. At the present time, 1963, at O'Hara's Mill near Madoc, north of Highway No. 7 a park has been set aside in which a mill can be seen. Demonstrations are frequently given to show how the old saw was used to saw the logs that were brought to the mills.

The methods of surveying the different townships of Hastings varied considerably. In Rawdon the concessions number from south to north, there being fourteen concessions in the township, the total assessed area of approximately sixty-seven thousand two hundred acres.

The first permanent sttlement of Rawdon took place about 1820 near the present location of Stirling Village. Many of the early settlers were Irish, English, Scotch or descendents of United Empire Loyalists. By 1839 the population of Rawdon had grown to one thousand and sixty. The needs of these people were met by one gristmill, one sawmill and two general stores in the village of Stirling.

The earliest available assessment roll of this township and probably the first one to be made out was that of the year 1838. It has the names of one hundred and fifty-nine property owners. Many of the names on that roll are still common in Rawdon and vicinity.

In 1842 only one lot was assessed north of where Springbrook now stands. In concession 13, lot 7 was registered in the name of John Spry, great grandfather of Clayton A. Burkitt, husband of Lena Rogers Burkitt R.N., curator of Springbrook Tweedsmuir history and also district curator of North Hastings District. Now this same property is owned by James Spry, former reeve of Rawdon Township, and his wife Effie, a past president of Springbrook Women's Institute.

Seven years later there were fifty-six settlers where there had previously been but one. The rate of settlement was quite rapid for the next forty or fifty years. Residents of Stirling Village had their names on the Township Assessment roll until Stirling was incorporated as a village in 1858.

In the early history of Rawdon Township English currency was in use and everything relating to money was expressed in terms of pounds, shillings and pence.
(1 pound = $ 4.86 2/3)

In 1838 one hundred and fifty-nine tax payers were taxed a total of $ 350. on an assessment of about $ 40,000. One half of the amount collected was for township needs and the other half went to support a jail and court house in Belleville. The least amount of tax assessed against any one person was 8 cents and the highest amount with one exception was $ 7.68. The average tax was $ 2.55 and the the average assessed value of the one hundred and fifty-nine properties was slightly less than $ 300.

BUILDINGS
The assessment figures for the earliest years of the Township's history include land, buildings, extra fireplaces and livestock. A square timber two storey house was valued at $ 150. and an additional fireplace at forty dollars. A frame, brick or stone house of two stories of two stories and not more than two fire places was valued at $ 300. Fifty dollars was added to this for each additional fireplace.