

A Letter written in 1825 - Blandford Township.

Notables
in
Blenheim.

Blandford, Upper Canada,
Sept. 20, 1825
Dear Brother and Sister:

This comes with our love to you, hoping it will find you all well, as, thank God, it leaves us all. Cornelius has still a wound in his leg, but he is a great deal better. We all like Canada very much; it is a pleasant country, particularly Blandford. There are many settled round here, most English.

We had a good passage over and reached here June 21. We were all put in the Squire's barn while our houses were building. Our houses were built with round trees laid one on the other, with a few boards for the roof, without any door or windows or fireplace. We had to do the best as we could.

Our land was full of large high trees. We were in the barn just one month, and some were longer.

William and John went out the next day to get some work and got work for all. We get six shillings and three pence a day, English money. We were glad to begin work as we had but three sovereigns.

We soon earned some money and then we all went to work at our house and land. We have a new brick chimney and oven, two pairs of sashes, a front door and a back, and a good roof shingled. We have cleared our five acres of land.

I have got four cows and four calves that I am raising up; have four sows and twenty young hogs. There are plenty of beech nuts, we are hoping they will be good pork without any more fattening.

We have about one hundred fowls little and big, besides geese and turkeys. We sell none but eat them all, for they are very cheap here. Your sister is making 20 pounds of butter a week.

We have a good garden

plenty of potatoes, and we have all sorts of vegetables; cucumbers and melons grow on the ground the same as cabbages.

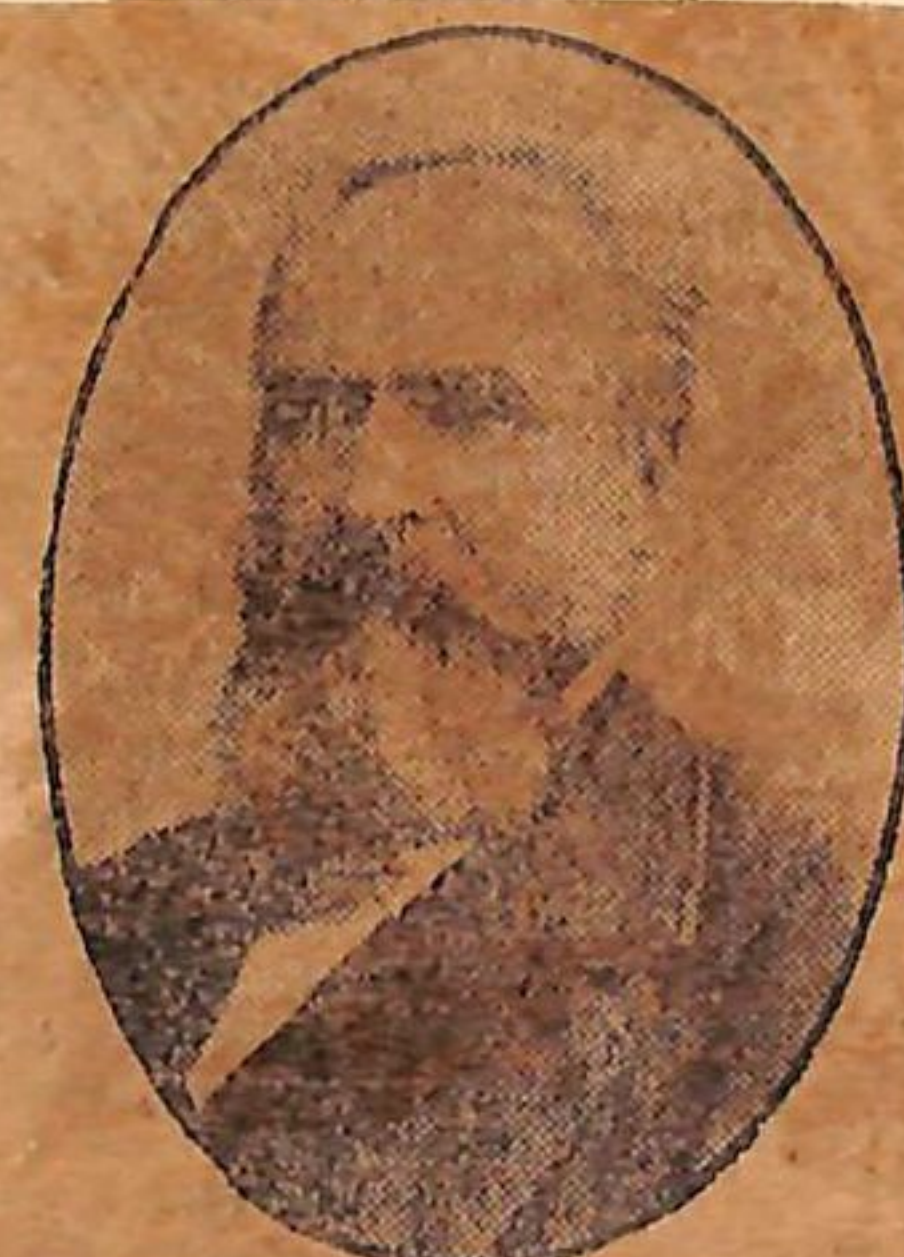
Our cows and hogs cost nothing in the summer; they

run in the woods and keep themselves. I only wish you had been here to see your sister and the girls making sugar in the woods, sometimes up to their knees in snow, but they made one hundred and 50

pounds of sugar and sixty pounds of treacle. Your sister has learned to make her own soap and candles. So I must conclude with all our loves to you, and all your family.
Cornelius and Elizabeth Voice.



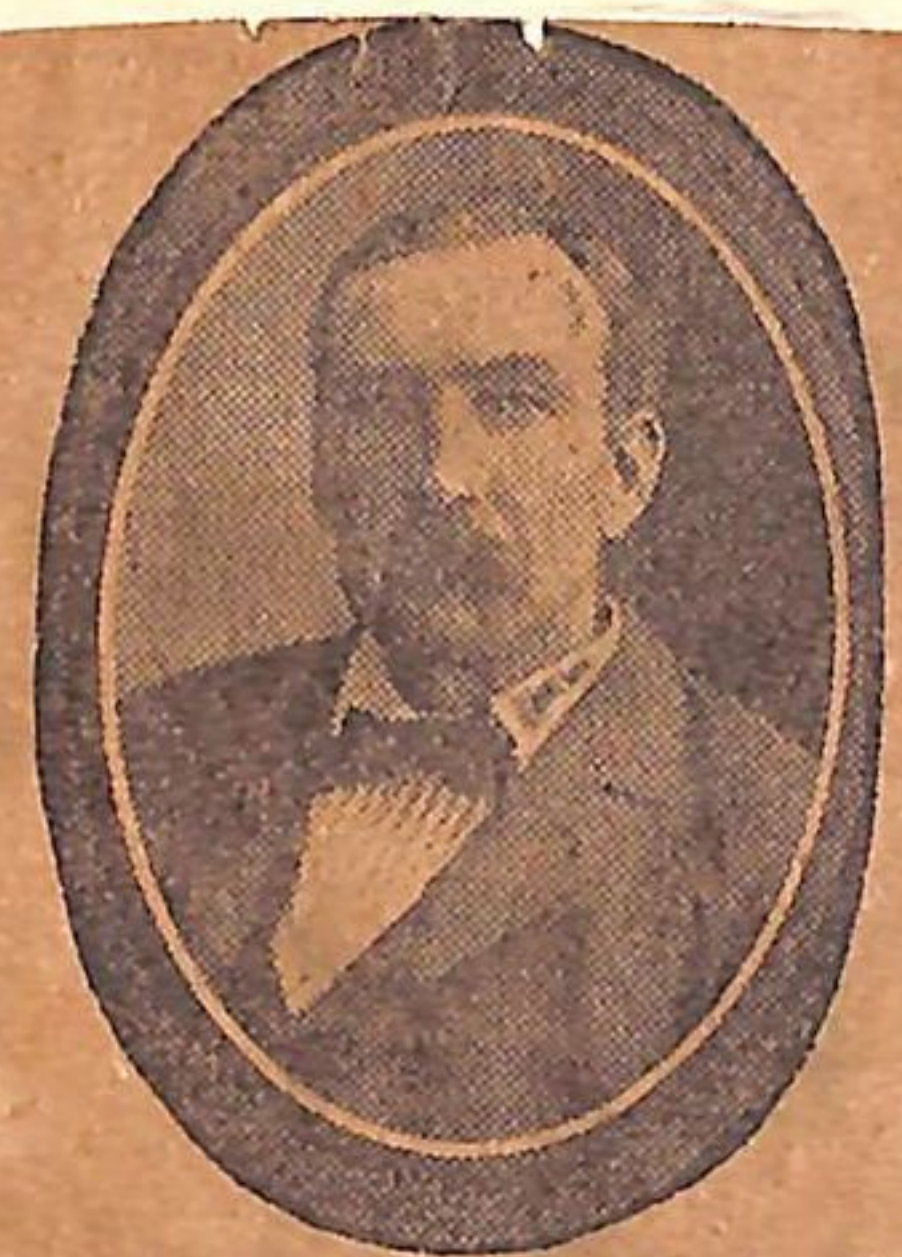
Emigrants crowd the deck of the combined steam and sailing ship Tamar en route from Liverpool to Quebec in 1860.



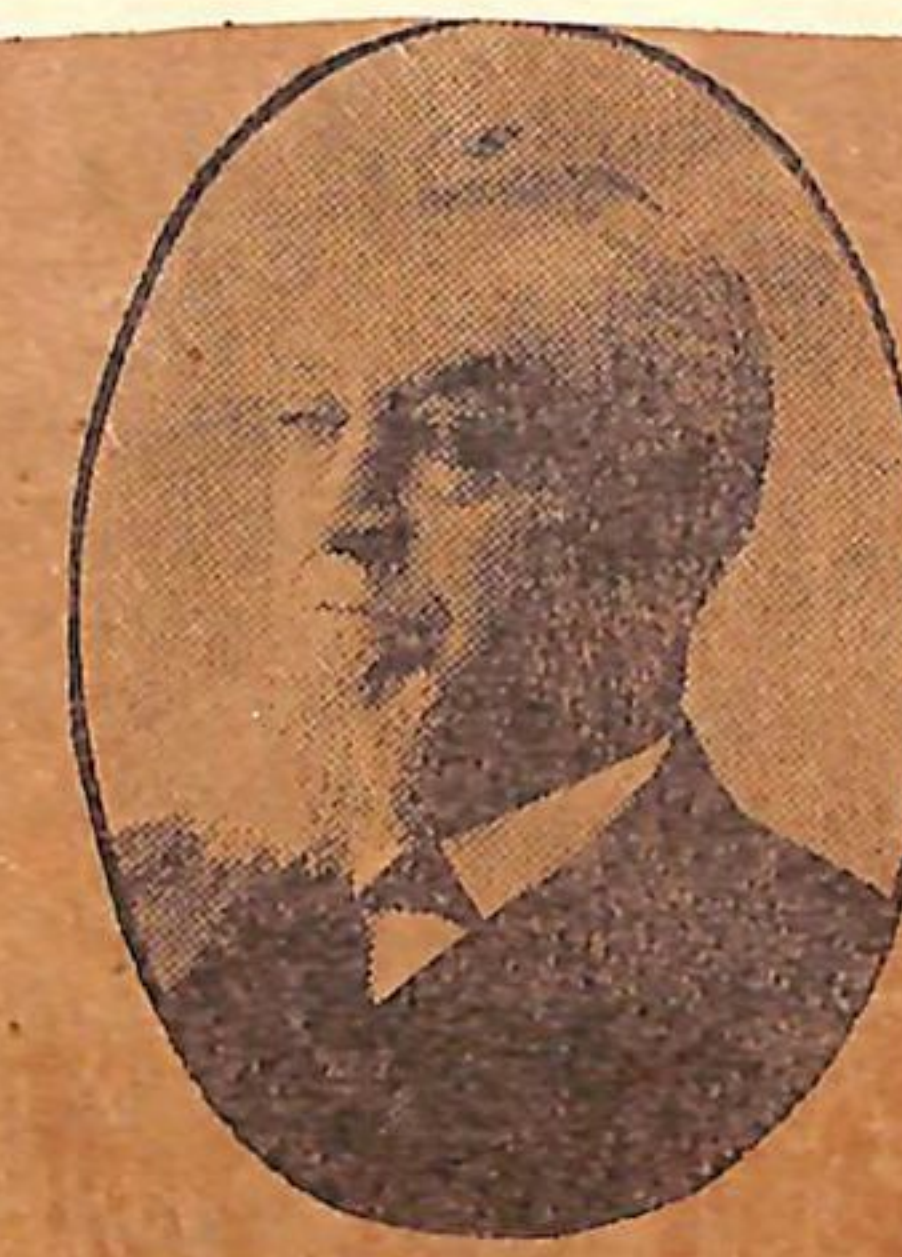
HENRY MUMA,
Founder of Drumbo, and a Dominion Land Arbitrator.



M. F. AINSLIE,
Teacher, clerk and treasurer, and the most useful man of his day in the Township of Blenheim.



WALTER MURRAY
Formerly Reeve of Blenheim, and Warden of Oxford County. A prominent farmer and man of affairs.



STEPHEN HALL,
long a leading member of the County Council, Bridge Commissioner, and Warden of the County.

EARLY DAYS IN AYR

By John Charlton, M. P.

My father moved to West Dumfries, one mile south of Ayr, in 1819. The village was then an active little place with the characteristics, to some extent, of a frontier settlement. The country surrounding it was new, and the population were mostly industrious, frugal, intelligent Scotch people, who were clearing up their farms, carefully hoarding up their resources and advancing towards competency. In Ayr John Watson had just established a small foundry; Mr. Manly had a flouring mill, and John Hall had a flouring mill at Jedburg. The churches of the place were the United Presbyterian church, under good old Alex. Ritchie, and the Free church, if my memory serves me right, had Rev. Mr. Inruar as its pastor. Both were strong churches. The attendance was remarkably regular, and, although the majority of those in attendance came from a considerable distance, rainy and stormy Sundays made no material difference in the size of the congregations, for the sturdy Scotch Presbyterians held attendance upon public worship to be a duty that could not be lightly disregarded.

quality. Our harvest help largely came from what was then termed the "Queens" Bush, which has since become a highly cultivated and wealthy country. Mitchell and other towns at the north were little centres in the great forest region that was opening up for settlement.

Four years of my life was spent upon my father's farm, and I acquired a great liking for the country and its population. Paris, Galt and Brantford were then the chief market towns of the region. Brantford was the most important of the three. The wheat marketed at Brantford found an outlet by the Grand River Navigation Company, and Welland Canal Feeder and Welland Canal. Dumfries and the surrounding region was a magnificent wheat country, and crops of the old-fashioned red-chaff wheat were abundant in quantity and of very fine

Among the most pleasant recollections of my life at Ayr were my associations with John Watson, John Wylie, the postmaster, and a prominent merchant, Joseph Kilgoure, and others. A high degree of intelligence pervaded the community. For a while I was a member of a debating club, which had many intelligent members who were fairly good public speakers. Mr. Watson, Mr. Kilgour and myself, with the help of others, succeeded in the year 1826 in establishing a circulating library, which I believe is still in existence, and which had a wide influence for good in Ayr and the surrounding community.

I look back upon the days spent upon the farm in Ayr with great pleasure. The life was simple and a healthful one, and all the surroundings were calculated to develop industry, self reliance and fitness for grappling with life's problems. The mode of performing farm labor differed greatly from that at the present time. We cut the heavy wheat harvest with the cradle, bound up the sheaves by hand and threshed the crop with open cylinder threshing machines. We cut the hay crop with scythes and raked up the hay with hand rakes. An able bodied farm hand was a stalwart specimen of manhood in those days, and the rosy-cheeked Scotch lassies carried their share of life's duties with cheerfulness and efficiency.