

# Yosef Drenters writes from Rockwood, England

By Lorraine

When Yosef Drenters, owner and restorer of the Rockwood Academy, left the village almost three weeks ago with England as his destination, he had hopes of finding more of the life of one whose attachment to the Rockwood Academy in its beginnings is well becoming factual in the minds of many citizens who, until a few years ago knew little of his existence.

In a letter written home to Rockwood, Yosef tells of his learnings and relates some of the interesting features of his visit to the town of Healaugh, Yorkshire, and his epistle is dated as of September 23rd, 1971.

"Well dear friend" he writes, "You know that I went to England to find more of the life of one dear to our memory and country, William Wetherald, founder of our Rockwood Academy in Ontario. At the Quaker Friends House in London I was received with kindness and help. The archives on Quakers in England was at my disposal and soon the archival found, for me, a beautiful testimony written for, and on the life of,

William Wetherald's mother, Elisabeth Wetherald nee Thistlethwaite.

"He had a beautiful mother and no wonder that he had the backbone it took to mean so much to early pioneer education in Canada. After her death William Wetherald went, at age of 15 years, to Canada and it was in the spring of 1835 that he and two other brothers, under the supervision of his older sister, Mary, left Liverpool on the ship Hibernia, to go to New York. From there they travelled to Fualinch where the father and three other children had started to clear the land, the father having emigrated in 1834.

"Before coming to Canada, William spent five years at Ackworth Quaker School, Yorkshire. That school I visited and is entirely preserved. It has great stone classical buildings and some or much of the 18th century furniture is preserved, some attributed to Chippendale.

"Their archives were put to my inspection and with the help of two teachers, Alan Rothwell and Brian Arundel, we discovered a writing book with a beautiful handwritten

poem by William Wetherald when he was 13. The work is unbelievable; neat and artistic. Also did I discover the last picture taken of William at Banbury where he died in 1898 while on a speaking visit here in England. I could write about other details of my trip, but, at this moment, I have to let you know a story of great interest to us.

"I am now at Healaugh in the Swaledale and have been here for four days now. I could not begin to describe the beauty of this peaceful and tranquil valley; the moors and heather, the stone fenced pastures, the sheep, the Swale River, winding through this valley; the small stone arched bridges crossing here and there, the winding road to the uppermost part of the moors where only a tavern, the highest in England, stands. The small towns, unchanged, planted on the hillsides are the most unspoiled I've ever seen and, in all my travels, this is one of the most beautiful places I've ever been.

"Healaugh. When I approached it I could not believe that such a place would exist. Perhaps 35 people live here, 2 farms and

some 25 houses. All the buildings are of limestone, beautiful, gray, the roofs are covered with flat stone, wonderfully squared out; all the places are surrounded with walls and some contain rose gardens in bloom now.

"One of the oldest houses, I think, dating of the 1500's, is the house of Mrs. Hutchison where I am staying — quaint, homelike, clean and lovely, and I was made to feel at home. Her neighbour, Mrs. Nathan, saw to it that I was lodged here and, upon me telling the two charming ladies, both widows in their sixties, what I had come for, they racked their minds and searched for people to help me find the birthplace of William Wetherald. At the moment I am working doing research on that and I think we will find exactly which one it is, the village not having changed since the 1700's. This is unbelievably a fact and yet can be explained by the fact that lead-mining came to halt long ago and the village lost most of its population who left to settle elsewhere; the buildings, being roofed with flat stones, have not suffered any decay. Setting all

details aside, the following story should interest you:

"Mrs. Gladys Hutchison is a sweet little lady with whom I have lodged. When I showed her my small book on the Rockwood Academy she exclaimed: 'Rockwood' that is the name of my cottage on the hill. My daughter Margaret was born there, a lovely spot among the woods. There are many rocks, my daughter had a happy childhood there and she always talks about it when she comes home.' Margaret travels now all over the world and speaks seven languages.

"Well, now we know that William Wetherald named our village Rockwood when we got a post office established in 1850, and Robert Passmore was the first postmaster. I saw this cottage Rockwood, (most cottages here have quaint names) and felt I was somewhere in Rockwood, Ontario, when I was there. William Wetherald no doubt, thought of Rockwood at Healaugh, Yorkshire, when he proposed the name in Canada. To think that I would walk, right into the house of the Mrs. Hutchison who could tell me this.

"I also met Mrs. Sunter, now 84 years old, who told me that her family lived at Rockwood Cottage one hundred odd years ago.

"It's all a dream. I am bringing pictures along of this wonderful place where the founder of Rockwood Academy began his life and spent a happy childhood. Again I must say that the more I work on the subject, the more I realize that a book must be written on William Wetherald's life. He was one of Canada's greats, who as a Quaker, sought no personal aggrandizement but tried to do good."

Yosef closed the letter with kindest regards. With his permission his findings are of tremendous interest to all Rockwood villagers and for this reason are being shared with the community.

Few of us have the time, the sensitivity, or the ability, to extensively study the background or the mental attitudes of those of the past who have faded into oblivion leaving their special touch of greatness somewhere in the world, but Yosef Drenters has and people in the community should recognize another kind of talent-identifying and attempting to understand the kindred spirit of William Wetherald with whom he shares his tremendous love for the Rockwood Academy, his diligence in probing to discover and his selfless willingness to share what is truly a communion with a past father and builder of Rockwood's past history.

## O.W.R.C. man says:

# Questionnaire contains one incorrect figure

An official of the Ontario Water Resources Commission told the Free Press Tuesday that a questionnaire being circulated by the Rockwood and area Ratepayers' Association contains some "incorrect" information.

Contacted by the Free Press after a telephoned communication was received from a concerned ratepayer, Ken Brown of the O.W.R.C. said that Question 17 on the circular misrepresents the true financial picture of the Rockwood water and sewer proposals.

The question states: "According to the Ontario Water Resources Commission's estimate, construction costs for an average home are about \$100 for water and \$150 for sewage annually, plus a service charge of about \$20 per month."

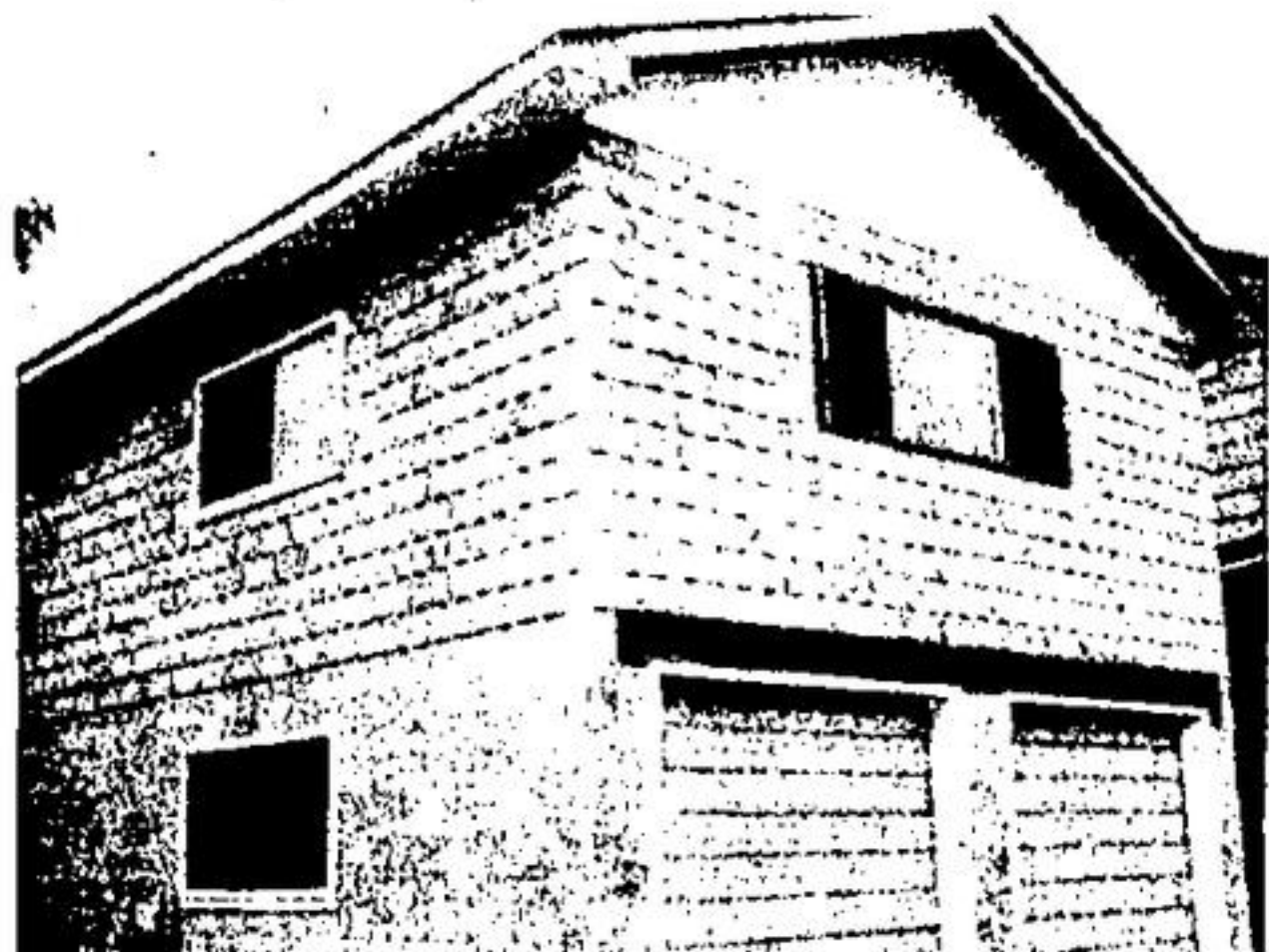
Mr. Brown said the actual costs for the sewage and water installation are approximately correct but that service charges are included in the figures. There is no additional \$20 a month charge, he said.

He said actual costs for a typical Rockwood home would be about \$250 a year, not the \$500 the questionnaire led some to believe.

A typical Rockwood home would pay approximately \$38.80 a year for water and \$149.47 for sewers, he contended, although lot frontage would alter the picture some.

The questionnaire was drafted by the Community Development Branch of the Department of the Provincial Secretary and Citizenship, a newly formed government branch set up to assist citizen and ratepayer groups in the province.

A spokesman for the ratepayers association declined further comment until he knew what costs the questionnaire referred to in the \$20. He said costs in the questionnaire did not include connection charges which could be as "high as \$1,000 to \$2,000."



"GOOD LOOKING and appealing to the eye", was Clayton McLaren's description to the township council when he applied for the go ahead for the new double garage on Main Street. After attempting to jack, renovate, and restore the original coach house on his property Clayton concluded that it was not feasible to do anything but replace it with another building. From his first building

permit application on April 5 to final clearance on July 28, construction beginnings in August, and completion of the garage last week of September, Clayton is proud of his effort and feels that the modern two storey garage, store room and work room is a fine addition to his grounds as well as an eye improvement to Rockwood's Main Street. — (Photos by Lorraine).

Fires burned two and a half million acres in Canada in 1970.

Lightning storms can be tracked by radar.

## Petty thievery damage noted

Evidence of mischief and damage in the vicinity of the Anglican Church lately has led to necessity for stronger police surveillance.

One church window was broken recently and other incidents of petty thievery about the village are putting Rockwood citizens on the alert.

Last week a young thief was apprehended and confessed to the theft of \$15 from a home on Main Street.

THIS year's special Christmas postage stamps will be attractive, with snowflake designs in different colors.

### TV TOWERS

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## Tiny tot teach-in

With the Rockwood Nursery School showing signs of bursting its seams the mothers of Eden Mills are hoping to restart their own village endeavor and already enrolment is standing at 12 youngsters.

The afternoons of Tuesdays and Thursdays are the regular days which have been set and will be in motion come this Tuesday, October 5. Start off hours for little tot school time is 1:15 until 3:30 p.m. and the fee required to support the effort is \$7 per month.



ALARIC, QUANTO Von Holsterburg is proud of his first trophy, which he won at the German Shepherd Sanction Show in Ancaster a few weeks ago, at the tender age of 11 weeks, winning over six dogs that were between five and six months of age. Alaric is a member of the "A" litter, "Von Holsterburg", which was sired in Germany. His mother, SG Sonny von Sandbachdamm "a", received a best of breed award the first time she was shown in this country. He lives at the Von Holsterburg Kennels at R.R. 2, Acton.

Crack up job Mrs. Anne Vos of Eden Mills is the specialized teacher who, according to many mothers, "did a crack up job last year with the kids" and it is hopeful that others will bring their youngsters aged between 3 to 5 to the town's tiny tot teach-ins with the only stipulation being that the children must be 3 before December 31st.

Mrs. Anna Maria Bell of the village is the top organizer of the pre-kindergarten curriculum and if it's information that is required, call and consult. According to Anna The Eden Mills Community Hall is where the activity will be held.

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### NOTICE RESPECTING ASSESSMENT APPEALS

#### Municipality of: Township of Eramosa

The assessment roll may be inspected during business hours, at the municipal offices located on No. 24 Highway, R.R.1, Rockwood, Ontario

Any complaint with respect to an assessment on the assessment roll may be brought to the Assessment Review Court pursuant to section 52 of The Assessment Act, R.S.O. 1970, c.32 as amended by section 10 of The Assessment Amendment Act, 1971.

Notice of Complaint must be made in writing either by letter or on forms available at the Municipal Offices.

For purposes of identification, please include your name and postal address, and the reason(s) for complaint. If possible, note also the assessment roll number, the street address, concession and lot numbers, and the municipality in which the property under complaint is situated.

Any Notice of Complaint shall be mailed by ordinary mail to the Regional Registrar named below, and, in addition, by registered mail to any person whose assessment is complained of, not later than the 31st day of October, 1971.

R. E. Michor, M.I.M.A.  
Regional Registrar,  
Assessment Review Court,  
Box 550, Cayuga, Ontario.

Signed: L. T. Hindley,  
Clerk,  
Municipality of Eramosa.

# We want action

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<b>71 LAURENTIAN</b> 2 door Hard Top, 350 V8, power steering, power disc brakes, radio, automatic, wheel discs, ready to go. Invoice.	<b>71 PONTIAC T37</b> 2 door Coupe, 350 V8, automatic, power steering, white walls, wheel covers, radio, rear defogger. Invoice.
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