

LIMEHOUSE

George Kennedy settled in town, giving his name

The man after whom Georgetown is named, George Kennedy, was one of a group of settlers who came to Esquesing Township from the Niagara region. George's father, like many others in that neighborhood, had been a United Empire Loyalist and George, along with several brothers, had participated in the War of 1812. George's legacy of a stint in the Artillery was partial blindness in both eyes.

After the war, older brother Charles Kennedy was hired to survey part of one of the new townships the government had purchased from the Indians. In the process he identified some of the best land and shortly before the survey was completed, about 1819 - 1820, five Kennedy brothers claimed land in the neighborhood of Georgetown: George, Morris, Charles, Samuel and John. In addition, their brother-in-law, Banajah Williams came to settle in the area now known as Glen Williams.

As the community grew up around the Kennedy settlement, George expanded his activities to include not just farming but milling, using power provided by Silver Creek, subsidiary of the Credit River. He is reputed to have run one of the first grist mills in the area and in the 1840s was complimented for some prize-winning wool produced at his local factory.

When Georgetown was booming in the 1850s George had much of his land surveyed into town lots and named the streets after his children. He died in 1870 having seen the community grow from a wilderness into a thriving centre of farming and commerce.

The Kennedy family would not build Georgetown on their own. In 1837 the Barber brothers moved to the area from Dundas, the first of several generations who would contribute to the history of the community. In the 1850s the Barber Mills produced more wallpaper than any other place in the province, and by the late 1880s the Barbers may have been the first to harness hydro electric power for manufacturing in North America. Other pioneers included James Young, grain and general merchant (the village's first reeve), and Philo Dayfoot, founder of the local leather industry.

Georgetown became the railroad centre of the area after the opening of the Grand

Trunk Railway in 1856 and the Hamilton and Northwestern Railway some 20 years later. A third rail connection was the Toronto Suburban Railway inaugurated in 1917. These brought plenty of business to hotels like the Railroad Exchange, and the Clark and Bennett Houses, where travelling salesmen would rub elbows at the bar with local farmers who came to town to sell their produce and pick up supplies.

Georgetown continues to flourish today with a charming, older style downtown area surrounding Main and Mill Streets and served as a setting for several motion pictures and television dramas in recent years.

From the days of the pioneers, Georgetown grew rapidly into an important community. Nearly 700 had arrived by 1845 and when Georgetown was finally incorporated as a village in 1864, there were about 1,400 people, rivalling Oakville as the largest community in Halton County. Over the following century the community grew steadily, becoming a town in 1922.

Pioneer 'citizen' Mr. Hale a First World War veteran

EDITOR'S NOTE: Mr. Hale has been chosen as the June '86 Pioneer Citizen of the Year. He will be presented with the award Saturday June 21 in downtown Georgetown. On the occasion of the Royal Canadian Legion's Diamond Jubilee, it was decided to award a long-standing Legion member. The Pioneer award is sponsored by the Halton Hills Herald.

By ANI PEDIERIAN
Herald Staff

He may not dance much anymore, but Harry Hale can still croon a sweet tune.

The 93-year-old Ontario Street resident says he lives one day at a time, a philosophy that's carried him through his life a happy, optimistic man.

Born in London, England, he was one of a family of six brothers and three sisters. He was only six years old when his father died in 1899.

"I'm the lone one still alive," Mr. Hale says. His wife died five years ago, after 66 years of marriage.

Mr. Hale has a daughter Kathleen Hurst in Acton, another daughter Joan Haines in Glen Williams, and a son Buster Hale who lives in Georgetown.

Although they come occasionally to visit grandpa, all of Mr. Hale's 11 grandchildren live a fair distance away, as do his 17 great-grandchildren.

"Won't be long till I have great-great grandchildren," he chuckled cheerily.

At 5 feet 6 inches, Mr. Hale isn't a tall man. He has grayish white hair and calls himself "plump, not fat".

"I'm fond of my food," he said, boasting of his culinary skills when prodded. "I cooked quite a bit before my wife passed away, and she was one of the best cooks."

In the summer, Mr. Hale keeps busy with his gardening. Along with flowers, the blue-eyed fellow plants a vegetable garden.

Born in the poor part of London, he went to public school until he turned 14.

"You left school at 14 in those days," Harry said.

He took on a job as errand boy in a small grocery store before landing a better job in the west end of London as a "traveller's assis-



Mr. Hale

tant". What that translates into is salesman's assistant. Mr. Hale would carry the goods for the salesman as they went from shop to shop plying their wares.

Interestingly enough, the salesman was selling ladies underwear, lingerie and dresses.

"I know all about what you girls wear. I used to sell it," Harry said. Dresses were knee length or longer, then. "It was my favorite job until the war came along."

In November 1914, at the age of 21, Mr. Hale joined up and was eventually sent overseas. However, before he was sent overseas, in July 1915, Harry married.

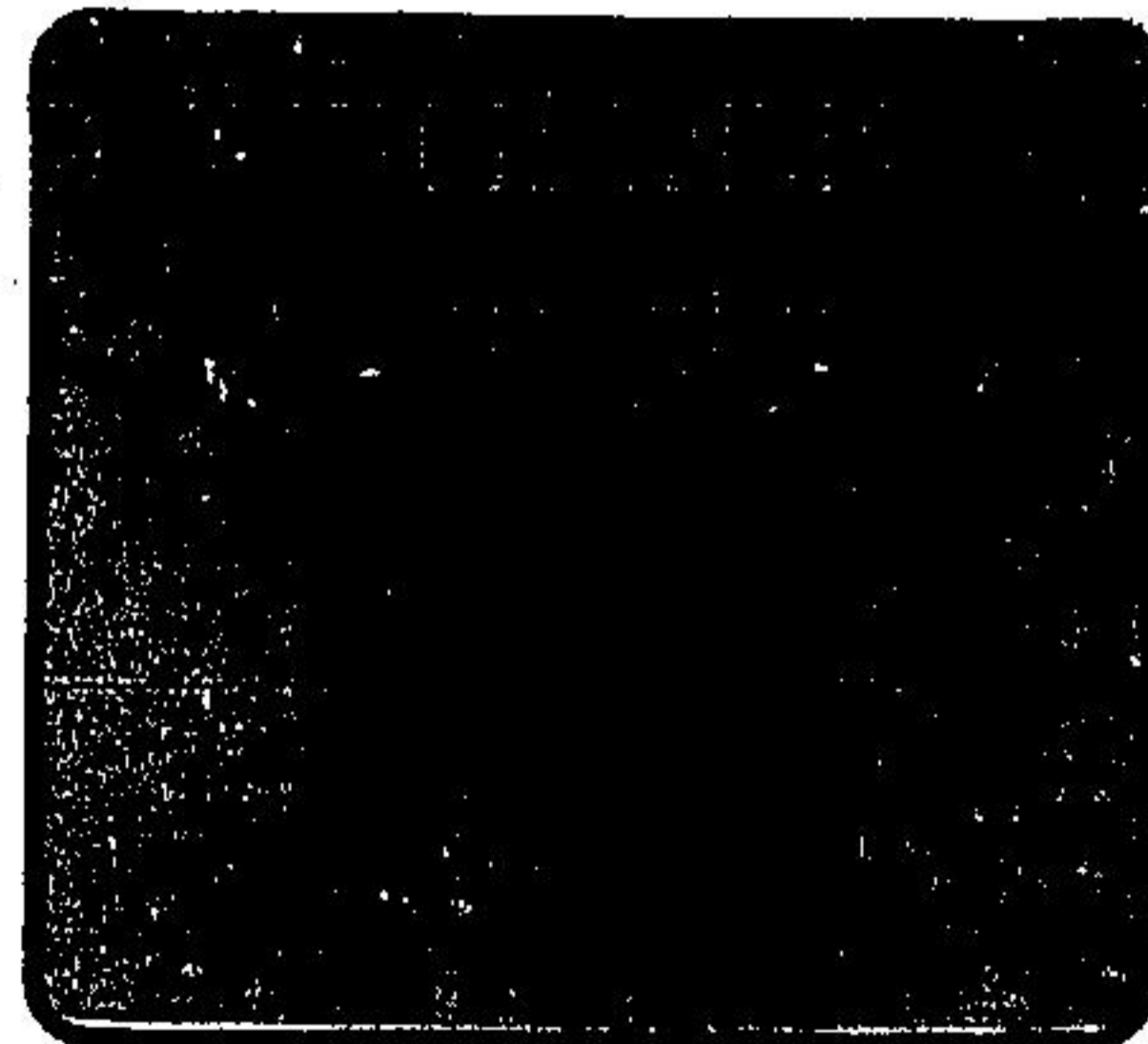
"There's no love around today," Mr. Hale said of young couples. "Not the kind of love we used to have. When I was a young man, love meant love."

Getting married again isn't on Harry's mind.

"What? At 93, sweetheart? Who'd have an old man at 93?" he laughed.

The Village Shoppe

"Quality Is Still The Best Investment"



Old Fashioned
SAVINGS

VISA

91 Main St. S.
Georgetown 877-6523

Oriental Delights

CHINESE AND CANADIAN FOOD

DINING ROOM

TAKE OUT ORDERS

HOME DELIVERY

10% OFF ON PICK-UP OF MINIMUM ORDER

LICENCED LLBO

KAI
YONG'S
RESTAURANT

109 Main St. S.

GEORGETOWN

877-5106