

# Pioneer cemeteries are being preserved



**DEFORREST FAMILY PLOT** on a beautiful wooded knoll at the corner of 10 Sideroad and Walker's Line, Burlington, features an ornate old iron fence surrounding most of the graves.

Several pioneer cemeteries in the northern section of Burlington have recently been taken over by the Burlington Parks Department, to be preserved, cleaned up and maintained in good condition.

They include some large public burial grounds, some attached to the tiny community churches, and some more private family plots where members of certain families were laid to rest.

Crews have invaded the grounds to trim trees, rake up debris, cut the grass and put them in presentable shape, after a long period when few seemed to care for their upkeep and they appeared destined to grow thick with weeds and brush.

Here in these plots lay the remains of many of Halton's pioneer men, women and children. Names like DeForest, Rasberry, Campbell, Davidson, Vivian, Small and others

linked to Burlington's history are prevalent.

Millgrove photographer Merle Gunby recently visited several in the area, compiling a pictorial essay on the cemeteries. Merle reports he was quite impressed by the beauty of the Catharine Small stone.

At the Colling family plot, he noted the oldest person to be interred there was 28 years old — stark proof that people didn't enjoy a life of "four score years and ten" in this country's earlier days. The youngest buried there, incidentally, was just a few days old.

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"One particularly poignant scene here," he relates, "was the sight of two graves, a large and a small, side by side — a child and its young mother who died just days apart."

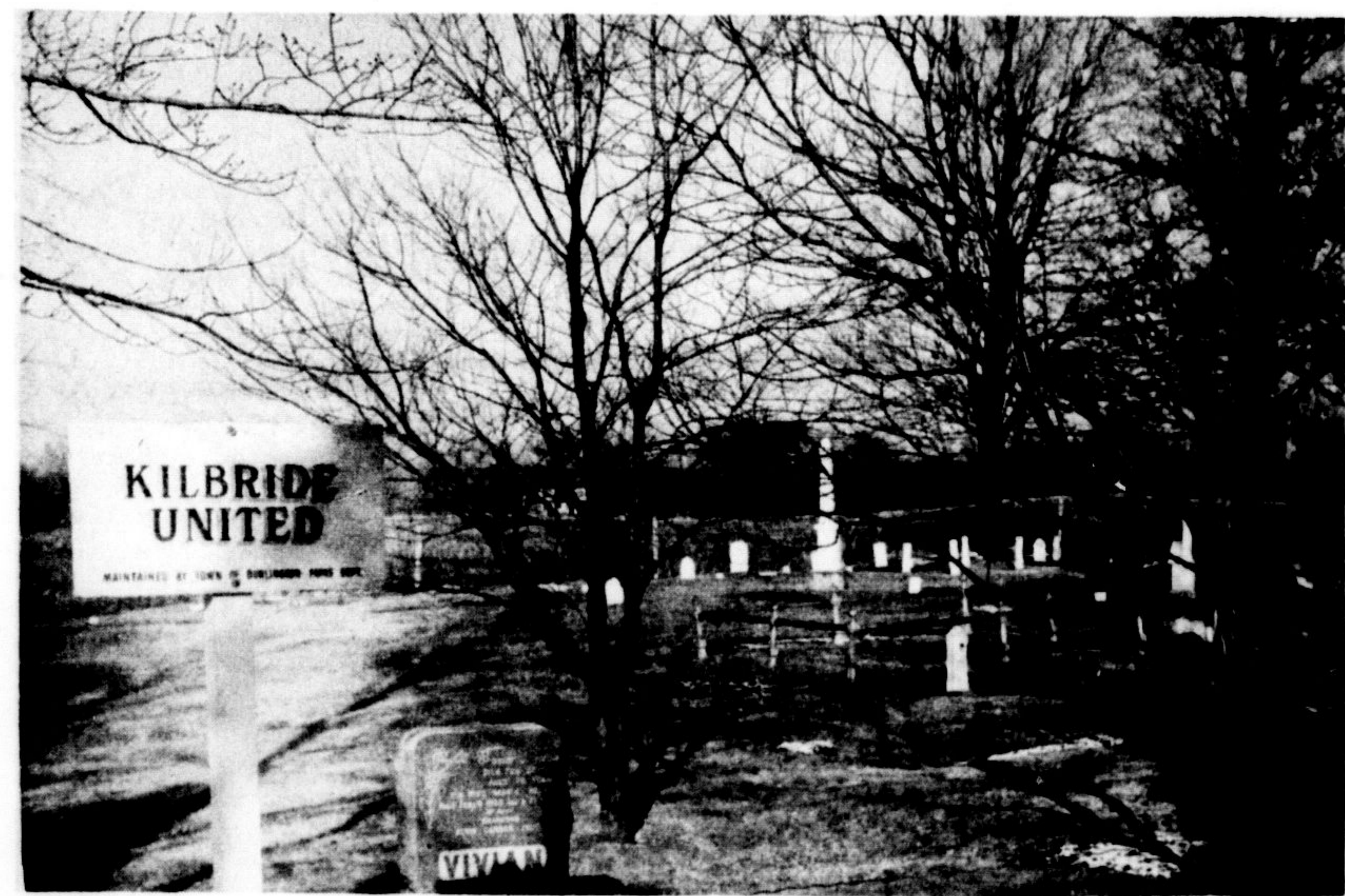
So much of Halton's early history is preserved in these rural burial grounds. Grave-stones list birth and death dates long forgotten by descendants. They fill in important blanks to those tracing their ancestral family trees.

"This is only one reason why it is worthwhile to preserve these cemeteries," the photographer notes, "for so much past history is recorded here for future generations."

The photos on this page represent five of the eight north Burlington cemeteries the Parks Board has agreed to maintain.



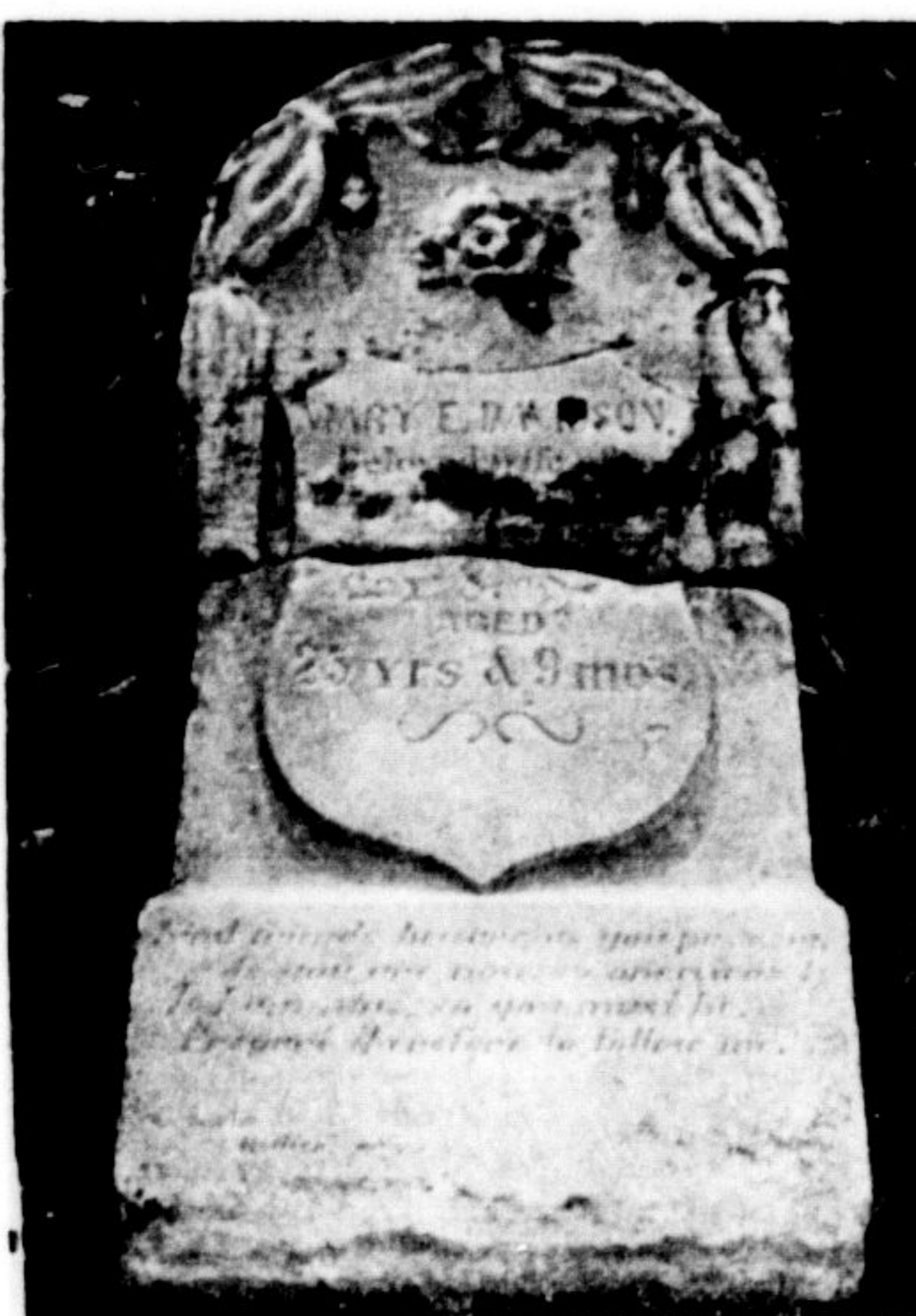
**THE CAMPBELL-DAVIDSON** family plot is situated at the corner of Appleby Line and No. 4 Sideroad in Burlington. It is one of eight preserved by Burlington Parks Department.



**KILBRIDE UNITED CEMETERY** on No. 8 Sideroad features one of those old ubiquitous ornamental wrought iron fences that are found in many of the older cemeteries. This is a large, well treed lot that lends a quiet dignity to the last resting place of Halton's pioneers.



**MANY OF** the old grave stones have a few lines of doggerel embossed on them. Some may be comforting, like this message left for us by Simon DeForest: "While on earth I did remain, I suffered much with grief and pain; but when the Lord tho't it best, He took me to His heavenly rest."



**A WARNING** was left for posterity by Mary Davidson: "Kind friends beware as you pass by, as you are now, so once was I; as I am now, so you must be. Prepare, therefore, to follow me."

**Champion Feature Page**



**HAND-CARVED ARTWORK** on this stone in the old Presbyterian cemetery on No. 8 Sideroad near Kilbride impressed the photographer. Someone laboriously carved out the flowers and the hand pointed heaven-ward. Though ground down by the weather over the years, the markings on the stone are still clearly visible.



**A SMALLER PLOT** is the Colling family cemetery on the Guelph Line south of 5 Sideroad. The Colling barn is shown at left, and the escarpment can be seen behind the tree at right. The once-upright stones here have not stood the test of time very well, and all have been laid on the ground. (Photos by Merle Gunby)

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