

# History of Durham County Given at Blackstock W.I.

By Mrs. Russell Mountjoy

Those of us who were born in Durham County will remember Durham County was the first map drawn and studied in early geography lessons. It has six townships, each of which has several small villages and in each of the townships along Lake Ontario there are the old towns of Bowmanville, Newcastle and Port Hope.

Cartwright Township formed in 1816 was named in honour of Sir Richard Cartwright, member of the Executive Council of Upper Canada.

Manvers was named in honour of Chas. Pierpont, Earl of Manvers.

**The Cavan Blazers**  
Cavan was surveyed in 1816, took its name from Co. of Cavan Free State Ireland, from whence many of its early settlers came. They were sometimes called Cavan Blazers.

Darlington was named after the old home of some of its settlers. A man by the name of Chas. Bowman owned most of the land on which Bowmanville was built. In 1958 it had its Centennial.

Newcastle now an incorporated village in Clarke which was named after Maj. Gen. Clarke, Lieut.-Gov. of L. C. had its Centennial a short time before.

Hope was generally thought to have been named in honour of Col. Henry Hope, a commander of British forces in Canada 1785. The first settler was Peter Smith a trader and hunter about 1778. It had an Indian village known as Cochingomik. In 1792, United Empire Loyalists began to arrive and take up land. Mr. Myndert Harris was the first pioneer and Jeremiah Bristol opened the first store.

Along the northwest part of Cartwright Township and a little corner of Manvers is Lake Scugog on which are the popular summer resorts of Caesarea, Williams' Point and Viewlake. At Caesarea is our Community Park, just in infancy. From Caesarea in bygone days picnic boats went to Lindsay.

**\$2.00 Per Child**  
The first public school S. S. No. 9 Clarke was erected early in the 19th century, later one-roomed ungraded

schools followed. Usually they were red buildings. Lately school areas have been formed and pupils transported by buses and placed in graded schools. At one time parents paid for teaching never less than \$2.00 per child per quarter. Now taxes and grants take care of teaching and maintenance. Later High Schools were at remote centres.

**Made At Home Clothing**  
Early in the 19th century wolves and bears were common in dense woods. Much of the clothing was manufactured and made in the home. Candles were also made there. Grandmother Trull mixed herbs and served much of the medical requirements of Darlington.

The earliest grain was ground in a hollow log. Indians traded baskets for provisions. Salmon abounded in Lake Ontario.

**Oxen Were Common**  
A Mr. Elliott later known as father of Hampton, built a shanty and the place was known as Shantytown. He started a mill in 1840. Business came from Manvers. Cartwright and Clarke. Oxen were used. They were hitched to a sapling cut with a crotched end and allowed to trail on the ground. A platform was nailed on this crotch. Two days were spent coming and going to the mill. They slept in the mill at night. Mr. Elliott also had a store and the present Hampton Park is a tribute to his memory.

**Nearly Lost Everything**  
In 1833 Grandfather John McLaughlin came from Tyrone County, Ireland, on a sailing ship having been persuaded by an agent to populate the Peterborough area. He came on a sailing vessel and a river boat for the hazardous trip to Lake Ontario. Grandfather nearly did not survive it. His boat was swamped in rough water and his possessions lost. He landed at Cobourg with a thin wallet, stayed in Peterborough a short time then took up a 180 acre grant of crown land in the virgin forest six miles north of Bowmanville. Other Irish settlers took land nearby and called the place

Tyrone. He cut enough trees to build a log cabin and to make a clearing to sow his first crop. Here his eldest son Robt. was born. The McLaughlins could grow much of their vegetables, catch fish in the creeks and occasionally butcher and share a pig. They had little cash left to buy tea, salt, sugar, and flour which they had to buy at Bowmanville, half a day's journey distant. The only cash crop was the potash which they made by burning the hardwood they cut as they cleared the land slowly, acre by acre. As soon as Robt. was able, he felled trees to make way for the plough and evidently liked it. When he was about to be married Grandfather gave him for a wedding gift 50 acres of virgin forest for his own. He then planned a house for this. Hundreds and thousands of cords of hardwood were cut, stacked and burned. The McLaughlins were very devout people and attended church four miles away at Enniskillen. Here, Robt. met his wife, Mary Smith of Scottish descent.

**Axe Handle Business**  
There were no movies, radios or TV's and as travelling over the narrow rutted muddy road from Tyrone to the village of Bowmanville was a large undertaking, between his work hours and his early bedtime, a hobby was shaping and making of axe handles, making them so well that they brought a few more pennies in Bowmanville.

In the driving shed of his new home he built a fine big work-bench, and in the evenings he made dozens of axe handles using the finest straight-grained bits of hardwood. This was an added source of revenue. Besides Robt. was anxious to put into being his self-taught skill in working with wood, secured from an old catalogue, illustrating wondrous pictures of carriages and wagons and decided after much planning to build a modest sleigh. A neighbor called one day and wanted him to sell it to him. He said he would make another like it and specified the time he wanted it. They could do all the work themselves but depended on travelling journeymen, blacksmiths and upholsterers who were very uncertain as to their coming on account of roads, the amount of work to be done at the place, their temperance or intemperance, all decided how inaccurately they would arrive, but the upholstering was done on Oshawa, who brought with him apprentices, necessary equipment, horsehair, canvas and leather. The man who was to get the cutter came around a short time before the set time for completion to see how the work was progressing. He had forgotten to say that he wanted a picture painted on the back of "King Billy crossing the Boyne". Robt. was not an Orangeman, nor an artist, but he set to work and produced a vivid and creditable picture that made July 12th famous. Next time it was easier to have him paint on cutters. The belated blacksmith did arrive but they had to work hard to make the deadline.

**The McLaughlin Shop**  
He then built his own blacksmith shop and the upholsterer was to live there as journeyman until the business moved to Oshawa. The de-

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mand for cutters and wagons outgrew the Tyrone place and Robt. decided to move to Enniskillen. His family now was J. J., Geo. and R. S., better known to us as Sam.

This new place was where the Seed Cleaning Plant now is. There was a larger shop, and separate blacksmith shop. On the second floor they dried wheels. Above was a tower building cutters and wagons. Robt. decided to build a carriage which he exhibited at the county fair, Bowmanville, and won first prize for the McLaughlin phaeton. From then on he changed over to carriage making. One day R. S., a young lad, was wandering about this drying room, a wheel fell on his head stunning him and cutting his head. His father to arrest the crying presented him with a brown striped humbug. After that the family always said "Sam had wheels in his head." Business grew. More men were employed and they decided to move to Oshawa. Robert bought a lot, built a smallish three-storey building with a blacksmith shop. He sold the balance to the town, which built a jail on it and later the city hall. Robt. was called a crank for quality and took it as a compliment. An extract from a faded and torn journal in Robt's handwriting was the following entry dated Feb. 10, 1875. H. Taylor, one cutter, \$30 in cash next fall and seven cords of good dry hardwood, maypole or beech. What confidence he had in his fellowmen in those days!

**Only Last 6 Months**  
Two other carriage makers in Oshawa voiced their opinion that McLaughlin would last six months, and it turned out to be the competitors who disappeared. The McLaughlin business expanded and they had to add to their building from time to time.

**Reforestry Project**  
Throughout the County a lot of forest has been recklessly removed, resulting in erosion by wind and water. Now, much reforestation has taken place by planting tiny evergreen seedlings which used to be supplied free by the Reforestation Government Station at Orono. Now a small fee per 1,000 is charged. Several farmers have small plantations. The trees grow quickly and after a certain time some are sold as Christmas trees. Some Americans have such plantations and ship the trees to their own country. Acres and acres in North Clarke and Hope Townships have been reforested and thus the Ganaraska project has had its enlarged, which will hold the soil and safeguard property from erosion and run off. Port Hope is in danger by floods from the Ganaraska area. The growth of trees lessens this danger.

**U.E.L.'s Move In**  
Beginning in 1788 U.E.L.'s and people from the British Isles began to populate the Ganaraska valley and the watershed to the north. They not only carried one million trees but turned out many forest products into cash etc., materials for masts for British and French navies. In 1850 there were several mills situated on the Ganaraska River which included saw, carding, flour and shingle mills. Unfortunately many settlers did not farm the lighter soils well, so that soon it was depleted or blown or washed away, resulting in many farms being abandoned or semi-abandoned.

**\$2 Million Ft. of Lumber**  
During the year of 1869, 52,000,000 board feet of lumber were shipped from Port Hope Harbour. In 1928 Durham County forest was started on tax-delinquent land. It is situated along the Ganaraska watershed. Out of the early plantations there has already been cut and shipped more than 750 cords of pulpwood, 1500 poles, with more to ship now and more being cut.

**First Trees Planted**  
In 1947 the first trees were planted on the newly conceived Ganaraska project. To date more than three million trees have been planted on 1500 acres of sub-marginal land purchased. These trees it is hoped will help to arrest the flooding of the town of Port Hope and stop soil erosion and slow down flash run-offs as well as shelter to prevent wind erosion. This will provide much wood products and employment. Scotch pines to the value of \$30,000 have been marketed from this area as

Christmas trees. There are many acres of mixed woods in the newly created Ganaraska forest which will bring much revenue and provide employment. The prospects of these community-owned projects are bright. The present value of these two forests, Durham County 1375 acres, and Ganaraska 7500 acres, is probably one quarter million and will in due course be one of the most valuable assets in the County.

In all the Townships grain-growing has been carried on and in the process many implements have been used, first by hand, later by oxen, horses, later tractor drawn, such as the sickle, rake, cradle reaper, binder, and combine. In the hay and corn crop the scythe, mower, forager baler, have done and are doing their duty nobly. Threshing was done by mills with horsepower, traction engine, tractor, and the grain cleaned by wind and fanning mill. Now for crop improvement some crops are sprayed from

tractor drawn vehicles or from an aeroplane.

**Livestock Raising**  
Stock raising for beef purposes, both pure bred and grade, are raised extensively, Shorthorns, Poll Angus, Hereford and for dairying, Holstein, Jersey, Ayrshire and Guernsey. The Department of Agriculture endeavours to interest young people in 4-H Clubs and Junior Farmer's work. Blue Ribbon sales and the winter and fall fairs are great incentives to raising better grades of stock.

**Dairying Development**  
Dairying has come a long way from the early days when raw milk was strained into milk pans in a cool place for the cream to raise and then it was removed with a skimmer or strainer, a small perforated piece of tin about 5" x 5". This was later improved by the use of metal cans about 2 1/2 feet high and 8 inches in diameter furnished at the side near the bottom with a narrow glass and a tap to drain off the skim milk. Next came the separator, a more costly apparatus but which secured all the cream directly after each milking. At first the cream was churned by hand and the surplus butter made into pound prints and sold. Creameries later collected the cream and supplied the needed butter to patrons. A few years ago the raw milk was collected daily in very large cans for the manufacture of cheese. There was a cheese factory just east of the village on the north side near the swamp and another at Ballyduff. They were a bi-product used in feeding of pigs. Today raw milk is collected daily from many dairy farms in a large tank as bulk milk and

taken to the city to be processed. Since Hydro has been installed in the country a lot of laborious tasks have been lightened.

**Poultry Products**  
Many people have gone into the production of eggs, chickens and turkeys in an extensive way. Since the immigration of the Dutch to our country this industry has sprung up along with mixed farming.

Along the south part of the County near Lake Ontario large fruit orchards thrive, particularly apples. The trees are carefully pruned in winter, sprayed several times during the fruiting season, beginning before blossom time as directed by authorities, as to the proper time and kind of spray. The apples are carefully picked, sorted and packed. Some are taken to a cord storage plant in Newcastle and sold locally, the inferior grades sold to be processed for juice and apple sauce. Pears, cherries, plums, also do well in these areas. Tomato growing is also a profitable industry for canning.

**Industries in Durham**  
Some manufacturing is done in Bowmanville. Some 600 work in shifts at the Good-year. There they make conveyor belts for all kinds of machinery, pump parts for mines, garden hose and hose for floods, curved radiator hose and hard tires.

There is a foundry and the Hollingshead factory. Vanstone's have a large flour and feed business.

At Newcastle there is a wood-product business, a box factory, where cases such as cutlery cases, are made. There is also another factory where desks and cabinets are made. Port Hope has 1700 workers

employed, has many industries which are turning out a diversified variety of products such as conveying equipment, bathroom fixtures, plumbing supplies, the only file factory in Canada, air compressors, condensing units, mineral refining, fertilizers, lacquers and paints, leather goods, food canning, aluminum furniture, knitting machines, uranium fuel rods, machine tools, and furniture.

**Good Transportation**  
The two leading lines of the transcontinental railways, C.N.R. and C.P.R., run through the southern part of the county. Many fine highways have been or are under construction. In the early days, No. 2 highway was like a path through the woods. Now it and 401 highway, nearing completion, in the east, greatly assist the truckers in the transporting of many products of the various industries to any point in Canada or the United States.

The St. Lawrence Seaway may later add to the shipping facilities of the County. Port Hope on Lake Ontario has a very fair harbour which will be enlarged following the completion of the Seaway and future expansion of industrial resources. Port Hope is a 90-minute drive to Malton Airport where T.C.A. operate to all parts of the world.

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