

Village of Brougham

Historic book-a collector's item

Hope for release in early October

By SHEILA McLEOD. BROUGHAM — Bob Miller, by his own admission, is not a writer. He's a "Mister Mendit" from Brougham, more accustomed to molding metal to machinery than words to sentences.

Nevertheless, Bob has written a book (not a wafer-thin air-wafer, but a substantial volume of 400 pages or so) that is scheduled for release in October.

"Ontario Village of Brougham: Past! Present! Future?", neatly stitched, bound and delivered, will, for its author, represent 6 years of research; countless hours spent accumulating, sorting and sifting through data; jotting down and writing up; frustrating lapses in a literary effort that might never have started had he anticipated the demands it would make on his time.

"A man who's running a business, shouldn't be writing a book," he advises, shaking his head over a backlog of work in his village 'Mendit' shop.

The decision to write a Brougham history was made, understandably, in Centennial year when most citizens, in a spurt of nationalism, helped revive the pioneer spirit of their communities.

Like many residents

in the area, Bob's and his wife Fern's pioneering decedents left a legacy of documentation, written and pictorial, relating to their generations.

As a Centennial project, Bob suggested at a community meeting that everyone should write a story on village life from their own family histories. The idea was never adopted. It became instead, a personal project.

With pen not too confidently in hand but Brougham securely at heart, the hopeful 'historian' started by culling information from his own and his wife's family trees. Papers and a diary belonging to Mrs. Miller's Grandmother Brown, who operated a store in the village, provided invaluable material. Bob, third generation of a family who first started farming on conc. 7, Pickering Twp. in 1839, also sorted through photographs taken by his mother who owned a camera back in 1904.

A constant aid in his research, and inspiration to keep on with the project over the past 6 years, has been his mother-in-law, Mrs. Howard Malcolm, Sr. An elderly lady with a retentive mind and colorful recall of the past, she could, Bob claims,

"write the book herself because she knows more about Brougham than anyone else."

Expanding the scope of his research, he gathered data from other Brougham families. The John Phillips diary and museum archives provided excellent references; Dr. Nelson Tomlinson of Claremont, who tended patients in the community for many years was also a great well of information and willingly reminisced for Bob's benefit.

More than 350 photographs and remses of documents were gathered and closely examined over the 6 years, to verify facts to the author's satisfaction.

The quality of this research was given a first class rating by a knowledgeable acquaintance who was asked for an opinion on preliminary compositions. "But," Bob candidly remarks, "he told me, the writing needed a good deal of fixing up."

The 'fixing up' is being done by Mrs. Ray Miller who is editing his copy. Bob also credits Mrs. Elsa Storry for giving advice on his material and John Grosart, a retired printer, for assistance in layout.

The book's 19 chapters will take its reader back to Brougham's beginning as Bentley's Corners, cover its growth, labor, property and produce (a comparison); the Rebellion; churches-

lodges; schools; doctors; the Brougham and school fairs; government of Pickering Twp; Wardens

sports; the young fry; societies; business; public endeavor; the Honor Roll; district

families; the Airport. The Airport and expropriation were the factors that, latterly,

strengthened Bob's determination to complete his book.

At this moment, almost half of its material has been typeset by the printers, Alger Press of Oshawa, and Bob (with his wife at the typewriter) is on the last hectic lap to complete the final chapters so that "Ontario Village of Brougham: Past! Present! Future?" will be appropriately presented to the public in October.

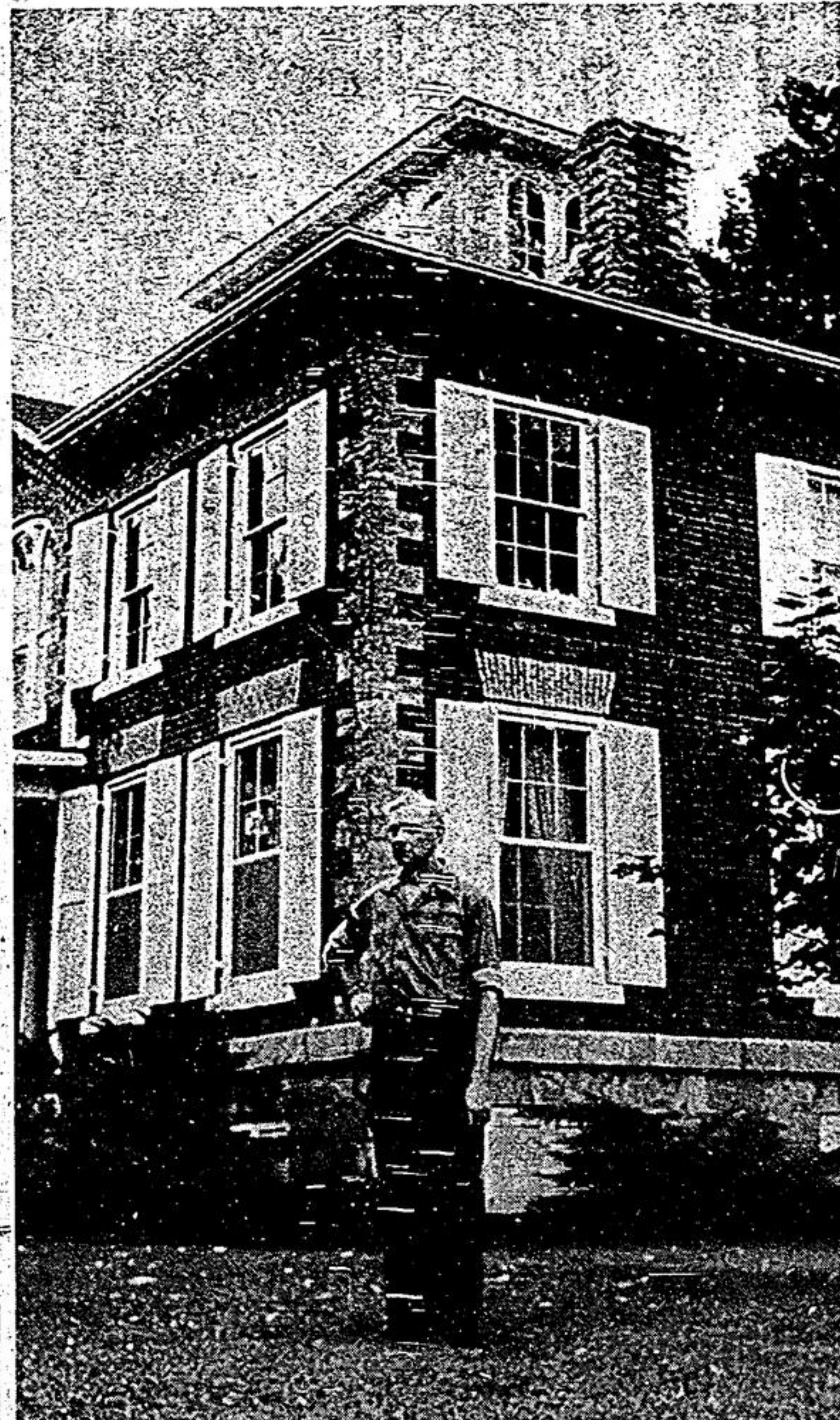
The hardcover, first edition will carry a drawing of Eli Barkley's Farm (lot 19, conc. 6), from the 1877 Ontario County Atlas, on its dust jacket; 75-100 photographs, and line

drawings by Mrs. Jane Buckles. Two thousand copies will be printed at the author's own expense. The cost is likely to exceed \$6,000 and the book may have a price tag of around \$7.50 when released to the public.

When the book becomes a reality, it will, for Bob Miller represent a commitment fulfilled, to himself, the people who helped and encouraged him along the way, and to Brougham.

"It would be a satisfaction," he remarks as he reads his copy for the printer, "to have something to remember Brougham by if the airport comes."

The village, too, may have its deadline.



Historian

A 260 page book, entitled 'The Village of Brougham, past, present and future?', has been completed by local historian, Bob Miller. It has taken him six years to assemble all the facts and photographs. He hopes the first copies will be available by early October.

Sheila McLeod.

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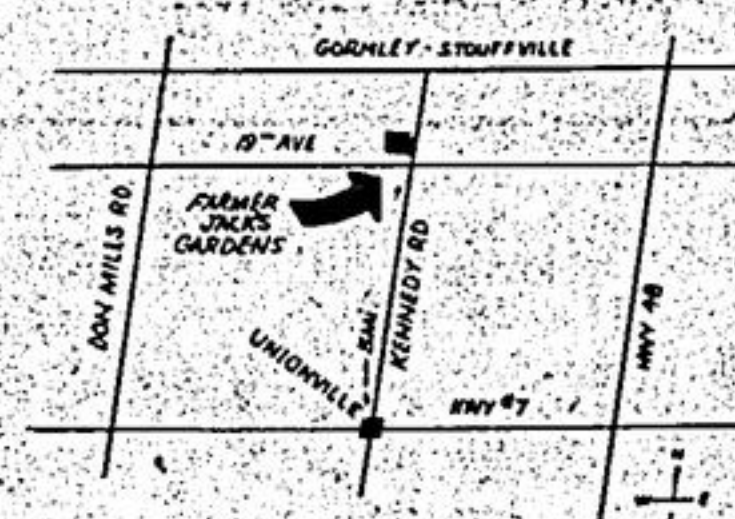
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