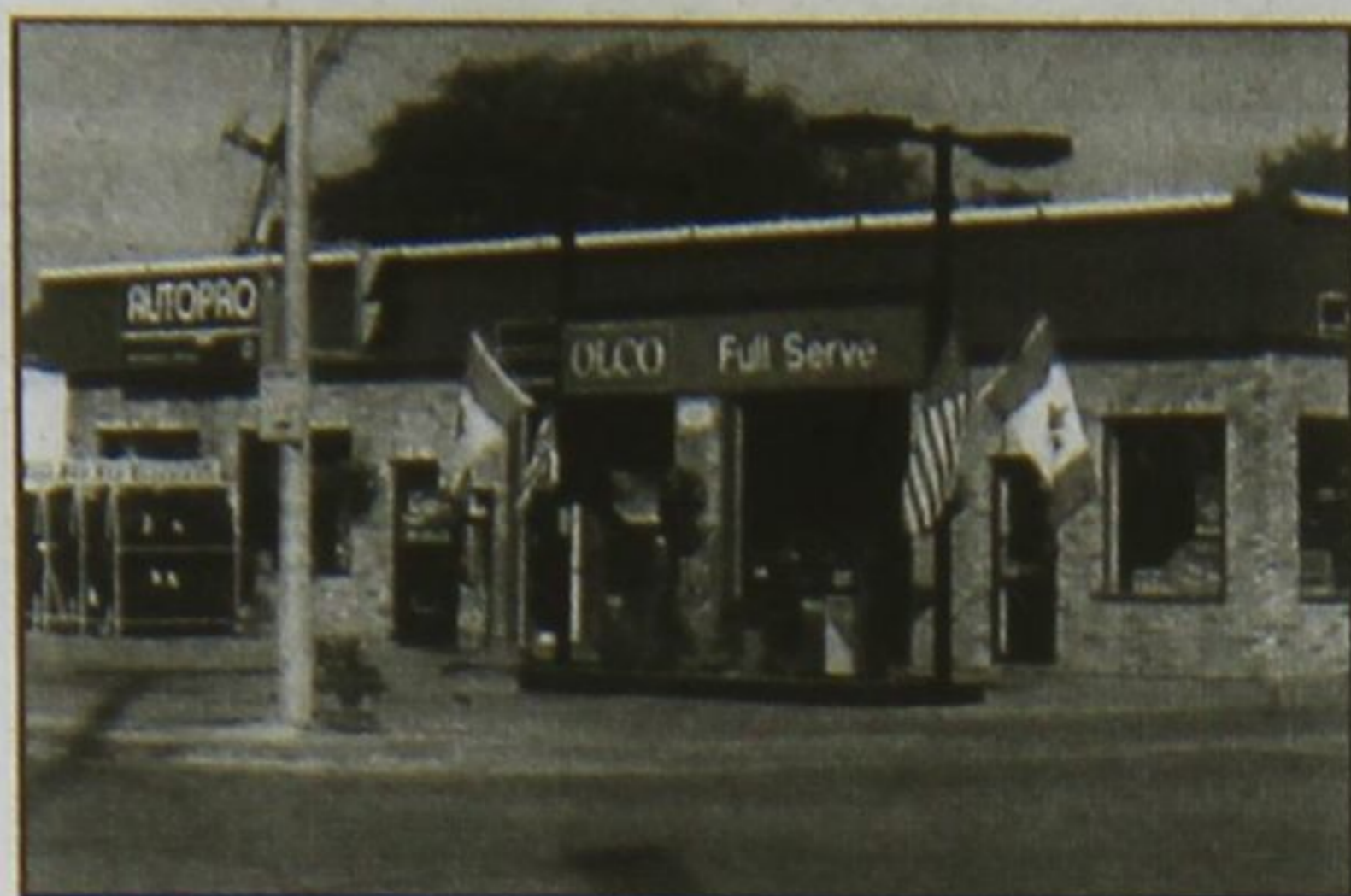


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Some of Abraham Stouffer's many local descendants. The bearded fellow is his grandson Christian, the intense young man in front his great-grandson David. The photo was taken about a hundred years ago.

Photo courtesy of Whitchurch-Stouffville Museum.

Abraham Stouffer's journey

So just who was this young fellow Abraham Stouffer, and why did he come to the wilds of Upper Canada in the late autumn of 1804, to settle the upper reaches of Duffin's Creek and thus give rise to this community of ours?

Who better to tell the story than one of old Abe's own descendants, grandchild **David Stouffer**, who published the following account in a family genealogy in 1918?

The family name "Stauffer" came from the Canton of Berne, Switzerland, and was originally the title of an official position, "The Cup Man or Cup Bearer". This title became a family name, descending from father to son. Many of this name still live in Berne and throughout Switzerland and Germany. (Ed. note: Several of the name even became emperors, such as the famed Frederick Barbarossa)

We commence our record with Daniel Stauffer, who was born in Thun, a Swiss town at the head of Lake Thun, in 1630... Hans Stauffer, a son of Daniel, started for America in 1709. (Ed. Note: Like many other Swiss Mennonites - see page xx - the Stauffers fled from religious persecution in Europe to the religious freedom of Pennsylvania, the "Quaker" State, then a colony of Britain).

The evidence goes to show that Hans, with his wife and three sons, and one married daughter, arrived in Philadelphia in the summer of 1710. Where Hans first settled is uncertain but on Dec. 31, 1712, his eldest son, Jacob, bought 500 acres of land on the west branch of Perkiomen Creek in what is now Montgomery

County, Pennsylvania.

Jacob's third son, Henry, married Magdalena Hess, to whom were born 11 children. The sixth of these, Abraham, along with two sons-in-law, later bought a large tract of land, out of which they made three farms, about a mile east of Chambersburg, Pennsylvania. Abraham built a flouring mill on his farm which was operated for many decades by his descendants, and from which the present Stauffertown, Pa. gets its name.


Abraham had six children, the fourth of whom was his namesake, born January 9, 1780 in Pennsylvania. He married Elizabeth Reesor. They came to Canada in 1804, bringing with them their two children, Christian and Elizabeth. (Ed. note: Many other children were born to the couple in Upper Canada, including yet another Abraham, who was the author's father).

It may be of interest to our people to know that in 1802 Peter Reesor, 22 years of age, a brother-in-law of our revered grandfather, came to Canada in order to investigate the prospect for settlement. He was favourably impressed, and made his arrangements for locating in the township of Markham, near what is now Cedar Grove. He returned to York and was offered 400 acres near the centre of Whitchurch, in return for his horse and saddle. Though not having seen the land, he accepted the offer, and returned the 500 miles on foot to his home. He then busied himself with making

see page H11

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