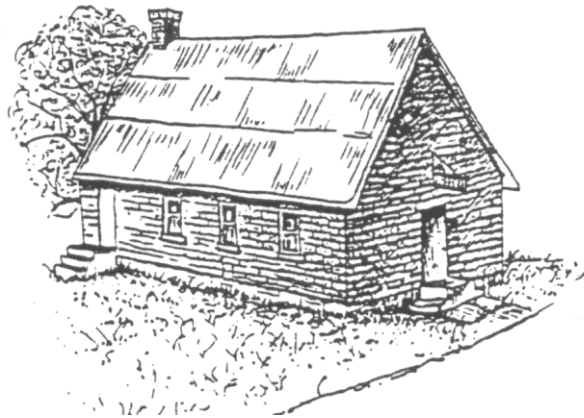


## THE GOULBOURN NEWS



**Produced by: The Goulbourn Township Historical Society (G.T.H.S.)**  
**Visit our Website at: [www.gcap.on.ca/historical/](http://www.gcap.on.ca/historical/)**

**Issue #8-August 1999**

### **COMING EVENTS**

#### **September 17, 18, 19, 1999 (RICHMOND FAIR)**

Once again the Goulbourn Township Historical Society will have a booth at the Richmond Fair. This is an excellent way to ensure our visibility within the Goulbourn community and promote our history. Since this year represents the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Goulbourn Township, as we know it today, we have prepared a handout for the public highlighting the events leading up to the amalgamation in 1974. We will also be selling a number of items from our gift shop including books on our local history.

#### **September 23, 1999 (G.T.H.S. MEETING NIGHT)**

The Goulbourn Township Historical Society will be holding their first meeting for the fall at the Goulbourn Museum, Stanley's Corners. We are very pleased to have Bill Howe, Treasurer of the Museum Board, as our guest speaker. Bill was actively involved in the old Christ Church, Ashton reconstruction project. He will speak on the renovation process and the problems they encountered in this huge undertaking.

#### **October 1& 2, 1999 (VILLAGEFEST)**

The Historical Society and Museum will once again participate in Villagefest at the Abbott Street Park, Stittsville. We plan to set up our display in the old railway storage shed owned by Ray Bell of Stittsville. In past years we have had a large number of people tour our display and purchase items. People always find it interesting to see the inside of this old log building.

**MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ARE WELCOME TO ATTEND ALL G.T.H.S.**  
**MEETINGS AND SPECIAL EVENTS.**

## **Meet the New Executive**

### **Percy & Helen Cathcart-Telephone Committee, G.T.H.S.**

The original Cathcart clan was among the early pioneers to Goulbourn Township arriving in 1822 from Ireland. Percy grew up on the family farm on the 8<sup>th</sup> line, Fallowfield. The family consisted of four children, one of whom died in infancy.

Percy attended S.S.#11 on the 8<sup>th</sup> line and then Continuation School in Richmond. He worked on the family farm for 35 years and then retired from farming and worked at a number of positions, including jobs at Bell Northern and Woolco.

Percy is a Charter member of the Goulbourn Historical Society. This year he received a plaque from the Society in recognition of his outstanding dedication to the Society over the past twenty years. He is also a former recipient of the Ontario Heritage Award, presented to those people who have demonstrated a significant contribution to local history.

Helen (Hall) Cathcart was born in Ottawa. She attended Crichton Public School, York Intermediate School and the High School of Commerce. Helen worked at a number of office positions including the Ottawa Citizen and George Weston Ltd. She and Percy were married in 1948. They have a family of two boys and two girls. Helen and Percy are members of St. Paul's Anglican Church, Hazeldean.

### **Freda (Leslie) Dolan-Historical Society Archives, Richmond Library**

Freda grew up on the family farm in the community of Leslie Park (Pinecrest Cemetery area) Ottawa. She came from a family of four girls and two boys. Freda attended S.S.#11 Nepean, located at the corner of Greenbank and Knoxdale, and Nepean High School on Broadview Avenue.

In 1949 she married Erwin Dolan from Woodlawn in West Carleton Township. They moved to Richmond in 1959 to a small farm on the 4<sup>th</sup> line, Perth Street. Erwin and Freda have a family of three boys and two girls.

Freda has been active in many community organizations, including the Women's Institute, at both the District and Provincial level. She has been a member of the Richmond Agricultural Society for twenty years. Freda has also been active at the Richmond Library as a volunteer for the past eighteen years.

### **It's our pleasure to welcome our newest members, who are:**

Jennifer Bulman & Henry Troup	Munster, Ontario
John A. Maguire	Ottawa, Ontario
Debbie Prince	Newmarket, Ontario
Philip Sweetnam	Carp, Ontario

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**QUERIES**

Scott Bradley  
61 Richelieu Drive,  
St. Catherine’s, Ontario  
L2M 2C3  
Email Address  
[scottbradley@sympatico.ca](mailto:scottbradley@sympatico.ca)

Knowing that my family originally had settled in Richmond. I was wondering if anybody in your organization has any information on a Jacob Bradley, who was an original member of your community. If there is anyone there, who knows more on the ancestry of the family, I would greatly appreciate hearing from them.

Isobel Kyle  
25 Bradgate Road,  
Belleville, Ontario  
K8N 4M9  
(613) 969-1705

Looking for the McFarlane family from Munster. They lived near the Jock River.

John A. Maguire  
470 Pleasant Park Road,  
Ottawa, Ontario  
K1H 5N1  
(613) 733-1980  
Email address  
[jmaguire@magma.ca](mailto:jmaguire@magma.ca)

Mr. Maguire has donated to the Archives a two generation descendency chart for Francis Claudius Duke, who with his family settled on Lot 2 Con 7 Marlborough in 1831. The daughters married into the following families: Maguire, Moore, Mills, Clarke, Lisson and Burchell. He noticed that some members of the G.T.H.S. have these names. He would appreciate if members with these names or possible family connections contact him so that he can get up-to-date on these families. Mr. Maguire has completed nine generations of the Duke family genealogy. The Museum file has two generations of this genealogy. He is willing to exchange information with interested parties.

Douglas M. Warren  
31 Parkmount Crescent,  
Nepean, Ontario  
K2H 5T3  
(613) 829-9964  
Email Address  
[dwarren@igs.net](mailto:dwarren@igs.net)

Researching the following Ottawa Valley surnames: Warren, Walker, Wood, Townsend, Junkin, Keenan, Whalen and Draper.

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**DID YOU KNOW (Taken from the book titled “What is it?” written by Lorraine O’Byrne in 1977.)** Where and what does the phrase “TO GO LIKE A HOUSE ON FIRE” come from and mean?: In early North American settlements most homes were built of wood rather than stone and the danger of fire was always high. Many homes were isolated with help some distance off and often with no easy access to water. Once such a building caught fire it often burned to the ground so quickly that little could be salvaged. When something “goes like a house on fire” it happens with tremendous speed.

## **A LITTLE PIECE OF HISTORY**

Excerpts from the August 1998 issue of the Stittsville News.

### **CARLETON COUNTY FIRE -also known as-THE GREAT FIRE OF 1870**

It was dry conditions and high winds in August, 1870, that led to massive destruction and even death in Carleton County, including in the Stittsville area. The fire brought not only destruction but also death in its wake, partly because of its wide swath and its rapid, blitzkrieg-like advance.

Among the deaths were those of Mrs. Patrick Hartin, an early settler from Ireland who settled in the Stittsville area, and who, on August, 1870, died clutching a prized old world clock, on the bank of Poole Creek; and Robert Grant of Stittsville, also on August 17, 1870, who was engulfed by flames in his stone home.

One wonders why these people did not flee from the fire and why they were still on their properties as the fire advanced. You would think that they would have cleared out some of their treasures and would have been lodged safely elsewhere well before the fire ravaged their properties.

But not so. The answer is to be found in the behaviour of the fire which some claim began near Fitzroy Harbour but which most likely began near Blakeney in the Pakenham area. This is the premise of Garfield Thomas Ogilvie in his book "Once Upon A Country Lane", whose account of The Great Fire, particularly its impact on Upper Huntley, is outstanding.

The fire, which broke out on August 17, 1870, following a two-month dry spell fanned out from its source in a southeast direction. With dry conditions, the fire, advancing with a front nearly ten miles wide at times, ravaged the northwestern Carleton County countryside, propelled by windy conditions.

It was these winds that accounted for the fire's rapid advance, almost like a sudden attack, on Stittsville and particularly on the

strip in the 12<sup>th</sup> concession of Goulbourn, as well as across the townline in Huntley and March townships that is roughly in the shadow of the current Corel Centre.

The winds of the fire, on August 17, 1870, increased to gale force around 4 p.m. and were closing in on hurricane dimensions by 11 p.m. This greatly increased the speed of the advancing fire. This is why Robert Grant was faced with rushing into his burning home to save the church records of St. Paul's Anglican Church at Hazeldean, other documents and probably money, including likely some of his own.

This is why ten-year-old Robert Grant, a future Ontario cabinet minister, had to carry his one-year-old brother across the road to a neighbour's, just in front of the advancing flames as his heroic father was entering their burning house in his ill-fated last act.

The fire had come upon Stittsville and the Grant farm so suddenly that there was no time for preparation. They were caught unawares.

The Grants knew about fires. Robert Grant had lost his farm buildings to fire four times previously. He knew its dangers. Obviously, however, he had underestimated the ferocity of the August 17 fire, which quickly engulfed his home and farm. He paid dearly with his life, and thus on August 17, 1870, Goulbourn and Stittsville lost one of its most outstanding pioneers, distinguished and highly respected.

Mrs. Hartin from an adjacent farm also died on this terrifying day, succumbing to the fire as she tried to reach the safety of nearby Poole Creek.

Her second son, David, (lot 27, concession 12 of Goulbourn) lost all of his buildings in the fire, including his log house, as well as his sawmill and threshing mill. In 1871, the year following the fire that had taken his mother's life and wiped out his buildings, he built a large stone house on his farm. In 1872, David deeded the farm to his eldest son, Charlie, and moved to Twin Elm.

The 1871 stone house now houses the Hartin House Restaurant in Stittsville.

Stittsville itself, centered around Jackson Stitt's corner at the intersection of the Huntley Road (now Carp Road) and the 12<sup>th</sup> concession road (now Neil Avenue), was virtually wiped out.

But such was the nature of the fire that there were pockets of survival as the fire was erratic and unpredictable in its course. Some farms would be leap-frogged by the flames, leaving them untouched, while others were engulfed in flames.

Kemp's Tavern, now The Chequers restaurant, the newly built stone building across the road from the Hartin and Grant farms, was not destroyed. At the time, it was harbouring workmen who were building the railway line through Stittsville.

The McCurdy stone farmhouse, immediately east of Kemp's Tavern, an impressive building built in 1832, the same year that Robert Grant built his Georgian-style stone house that was gutted in the fire, was untouched by the fire, as was the adjacent Butler farmhouse where young Robert Grant and probably the rest of his family had fled on the night of the fire.

South of Stittsville, on the tenth line, the Methodist Chapel (the future Stittsville United Church) had survived the fire, thanks to mud placed on its wooden sills by frantic parishioners' hands.

In between the Chapel and Stittsville were the railway tracks. By this time, less than one month before the ceremonial first train passed through Stittsville on September 15, 1870, the station and water tower must have been erected. Yet they were untouched by the fire.

So, the Great Fire, while widespread, did not deliver its destruction to every single acre in its path. But it was widespread and moved fast, covering the 40 miles between its start and its most eastward point within the one day, August 17, 1870. Only the breaking of a dam which created Dow's

Lake and letting the waters spew across the countryside down an old creekbed to LeBreton Flats at the Ottawa River saved the city of Ottawa from the fire's destruction.

But Western Carleton County was devastated. People had sought refuge in the nearest water, the Jock, the Ottawa River, any creek.

An Ottawa newspaper recounted the damage in Nepean, particularly around Bell's Corners, adding, "at Goulbourn, the damage has been immense", although details were scarce at that time.

With regard to Robert Grant's farm, one of the most prosperous, the Ottawa Citizen reported: "Mr. Grant's farm has been completely destroyed, not a fence or building being left on it, and his own life lost."

The newspaper further reported that Mrs. Grant and their children escaped with their lives, although not without hazard..."Mrs. Grant's dress having caught fire as she rushed from the burning building with her children."

And further, the newspaper reported that from a swamp west of Bell's Corners to Mr. Grant's farm, a distance of five miles, only one house along the road was burned. But from Stittsville northwest through Huntley township, as well as in March township and the north part of Nepean township, a swath of country four miles wide was utter destruction with nine houses out of every ten destroyed.

There were reports of winds of terrific force, which swept the fire along "in billows of flame until the whole west appeared like a sea of fire rolling down..."

Even after the horrendous first night, the fire still smoldered in places, burning in fallen logs and dry stumps and creeping through the logs of the corduroy roads.

Those unaffected by the fire in Ottawa and elsewhere launched a relief area to help the 2,000 refugees from the fire. Many were without food, clothing and shelter. Daily in the days following August 17, quantities of

clothing, provisions and lumber were sent to Goulbourn, Huntley and March townships, the three devastated areas as well as the Bell's Corners area.

An observer, calling the fire a "national calamity", tells of his observations.

"Today (Sunday) I drove out to Bell's Corners, with a friend, to see the county and the site of the most fatal destruction in this whole section. I cannot express to you the effect on my mind and heart, of the many scenes of destruction of the most valuable property I have seen in a drive of three hours. Large stone houses and barns are burned up as chaff. I have imagined how the ruins of some of the populous sections of Egypt must strike the beholder, as ruin after ruin meets his eye, as he treads onward, and every moment something new presenting itself. Here the destruction was the work of a few hours; in Egypt the destruction was that of ages. But as the charred walls of farm house and barns met the eye at every turn of the road, I felt that the ruin was as complete as that of Memphis or Palmrya."

Even the Toronto Daily Telegraph, on September 9, 1870, reported on the Great Fire, albeit three weeks after it happened:

"Few at this distance have an adequate idea of the magnitude of the disaster that has fallen upon the people in the burnt district adjacent to Ottawa. So sweeping a fire was never before known, in a purely farming country such as that which was devastated in this instance. For miles there is not a house standing, not a fence, and not a tree except bare trunks, denuded of all their branches."

The railway track from Carleton Place to Stittsville was completed by this time and Canada Central Railroad Co. trains transported barrels of water from the Mississippi River at Carleton Place to the Stittsville area. However, you have to wonder how effective this was as each train carried only 40 barrels.

Railway workers also fanned out through the area, helping farmers to save many a home.

The fire killed many cattle and sheep throughout the area, not only threatening the farmers' future existence but also creating the possibility of a pestilence from the dead carcasses. But farmers, exhausted, had little time for burying these carcasses.

The fire spread so rapidly not only because of the high winds and extremely dry conditions but also because of the nature of the land. The landscape was a patchwork of farms and forested areas, a backdrop which allowed bush and grass fires to spread unchecked over distances.

Residents fled before the flames, sometimes often without any belongings other than the clothes on their backs. They sought refuge in creeks and streams, even wells, the Ottawa River for those close to it, open fields or neighbouring homes miraculously spared from the rampaging flames.

When the Great Fire had subsided, it had killed 12 people, torched approximately 400 farms and created 2,000 refugees.

The fire sufferers of Carleton County eventually were voted \$25,000.00 in financial assistance by the Dominion Government of the day. In addition, Carleton County Council voted \$5,000.00 in relief for those affected by the fire. There were private donations as well, and some farmers did have insurance to help cover their losses.

The relief funds largely went to furnish flour and grain to the farmers so that they could survive through to the harvest of 1871.

The Carleton County Fire of 1870, with its deaths and property damage remains the Stittsville area's most tragic natural disaster.

### **MUSEUM NOTES:**

We are very pleased to have received positive news regarding our grant application to the Ontario Trillium Foundation for the sum of \$24,600.00. This grant will enable us to purchase a digital camera, which will be used to digitize our fragile historical documents and photograph collection. In addition a new computer will be purchased, which will have the ability to store digital information and retrieve it electronically. We will also be able to make copies of this stored information for our patrons. Portions of this digitized material could also be transferred to our web site, where it would be available worldwide.

The computer will have an Internet connection, so electronic requests will come to the Museum computer, rather than to my personal computer at home. Our plan is to hire one or two people for a couple of months, who will perform the bulk of this work. We would also like to go into the community and photograph the private collections of individuals or organizations. These collections would not normally be available to us, even on loan.

This project will go a long way towards preserving the history of our community for future generations. As it now stands, many of these photographs and valuable documents are being lost.

We have moved the gift shop from the annex building to the stage area of the Museum. This seems to work better for our visitors, saves us from having to ask for volunteers for two buildings, and enhances the appearance of the Museum. We have sold \$510.00 in merchandise since opening day. This is quite good for our first year, as we are only open on Sunday afternoons, and we are still in the process of acquiring inventory. Our big fall events, the Richmond Fair and Villagefest, always contribute substantially to our sales.

We are gearing up for these two events, at which we always need a lot of volunteers to act as ambassadors for our Historical Society and Museum. These activities increase our visibility in the community, and they are an excellent way to maintain and renew our community contacts.

By: Donna Keays-Hockey  
Curator, Goulbourn Museum

### **Add a smile to your day (some creative cemetery transcriptions)**

#### Care of the Internet

In a Silver City, Nevada, cemetery:

Here lays Butch.  
We planted him raw.  
He was quick on the trigger,  
But slow on the draw.

On a grave from the 1880's in Nantucket, Massachusetts:

Under the sod and under the trees  
Lies the body of Jonathan Pease.  
He is not here, there's only the pod:  
Pease shelled out and went to God.

A lawyer's epitaph in England:

Sir John Strange  
Here lies an honest lawyer,  
And that is Strange.

\*\*\*\*\*RECIPES\*\*\*\*\*

**This recipe is courtesy of Colonial Cookbook  
BROWN BETTY**

3 cups sliced apples	1/2 tsp. nutmeg
1 1/2 cups soft breadcrumbs	1/4 cup melted butter
1/3 cup brown sugar	3/4 cup water
1 tsp. cinnamon	

Toss apples, breadcrumbs, brown sugar, cinnamon and nutmeg together in a bowl.  
 Turn into buttered 1 1/2 to 2 quart baking dish.  
 Pour melted butter and water over top.  
 Bake at 350°F for 45 minutes.  
 Serve with hard sauce, cream or ice cream.

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**MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION**

To the Goulbourn Township Historical Society

Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_ First Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Town or City: \_\_\_\_\_ Province: \_\_\_\_\_

Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone: (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Amount Enclosed: \_\_\_\_\_

Memberships in the Goulbourn Township Historical Society are: Single member \$10.00 per year and Family membership \$15.00 per year. Please make your cheque payable to “The Goulbourn Township Historical Society” and mail it to: The Goulbourn Township Museum and Historical Society c/o The Township of Goulbourn, 2135 Huntley Road, P.O. Box 189, Stittsville, Ontario K2S 1A3.

The mandate of the Goulbourn Township Historical Society is to foster an understanding of our local heritage. Meetings are held on the 4th Thursday of the month. Most meetings have a guest speaker, addressing a topic of historical interest. The Historical Society is active within the schools, speaking to children about the history of the township and showing them some of the artifacts we have on display at the Museum. The Society also participates in Township events such as Canada Day, Villagefest and the Richmond Fair.

Members of “The Goulbourn News” committee are: Erskine Rivington, Hilda Moore, Donna Hockey and Virginia Notley. If you have questions or suggestions you are invited to call Hilda 838-2274 or Virginia 836-1556.