

THE GOULBOURN NEWS

Issue #3 –2012



Photo by Barbara Bottriell

Tall ship playing the role of HMS Royal George passing Bath Ontario on its way to Kingston, June 30th, 2012. The Royal George was built for the British in Kingston, launched in 1809, and was the largest warship operating on Lake Ontario. It was involved in a key battle with the Americans in November 1812, which has come to be known as "The Flight of the Royal George".

COMING EVENTS/PROGRAMS

October 20 is our next program. To be held at the Stittsville Library, it is titled "**The Queen - A Celebration**". This will be an open house and is a joint presentation of the Goulbourn Historical Society and the Goulbourn Museum. If anyone has artifacts celebrating the Queen or the royal family, we would love to borrow them for that afternoon. Contact Georgia at 613-836-7931

On November 17 the program is "**Women at War**" with Deborah Brummell. Deborah will concentrate on nursing but there will be a discussion on the many roles women played during major wars. This event will be at the Stittsville Legion.

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Ontario Ministry of Culture, Tourism, and Recreation.



Genealogically Speaking ... “You’re related to who??”

Genealogy from the Rectory – Part 4 Genealogy in Goulbourn



It’s time for a top 10 list – Things to AVOID!!

1. **Don’t Forget Your Living Relatives!** Putting off talking to great-aunt Millie because your grandmother threw her out of the kitchen 50 years ago is a big mistake. Visiting with and talking to relatives should be at the top of your “to do list” before it is too late. Don’t make this one of those terrible “if Only” moments!!
2. **Don’t Trust Everything You See In Print!** Writing something down doesn’t necessarily mean that it is correct. Check original sources whenever possible. Mistakes are easily made and too easily repeated. Don’t assume anything as ‘gospel’ truth just because it is in print. This is especially true when using the Internet. It is a valuable tool but too many people just repost other’s stuff, and so mistakes get passed on. This is especially true with some of the many genealogy sites that allow people to post massive amounts of material. Much of which is taken from other people’s material. This results in the same wrong information being shared repeatedly. How often do you see children born after their parents’ death or even before their birth? This is a particular problem with common names that run in families or areas.
3. **Congratulations – You Are Related to Someone Famous!** You share a surname with someone famous, therefore you must be related. This may turn out to be true but you still need to do the research and work your way back from yourself to the famous “ancestor”. Almost all the time this will not prove the connection but the search can prove to be more fun.
4. **Genealogy Is More Than Just Names and Dates!** It is more than just about how many names you have in your database or how far back you can trace your ancestry. Bragging rights are fun but getting to know your ancestors – where they lived, what they did, what historical events impacted them, etc is more interesting. Get to know their stories!
5. **Beware of Generic Family Histories!** They are in magazines, in your mail box, on the internet, at various tourist stops in Ireland, etc – with the promise of “family history in ...”. These mass-produced coats of arms and surname books or charts may be

interesting but they are NOT your family's history. Buyer beware! Understand what you are buying and either enjoy for fun or avoid!

6. **Don't Accept Family Legends As Fact!** There are always great stories and traditions passed down from generation to generation. There is a wonderful one that sort of explains some of the Hobbs connections in Goulbourn, Ontario and Pontiac County, Quebec which might even have some truth in it! Most of these are difficult to prove or disprove, but our job is to try and sort out fact from fiction and record the stories as they are – legend or history, and write down how we arrived at these conclusions.
7. **Don't Limit Yourself to Just One Spelling!** If you do you will be missing out on a lot of good stuff. This is particularly true when searching indexes on the internet where you are especially at the whim of the indexer who may or may not take the time to either read carefully or check their typing for errors or transposed letters. I have mentioned this in previous columns! Always search for variations on your ancestor's names (try 'ia' as well as 'ai', or double letters such as 'nn' and 'tt').
8. **Don't Neglect to Document Your Sources!** This helps to avoid repeating research and wasting your time as well as allowing others to verify your data or avoid the same mistakes that you made. Keep track of what you find, where and when you found it, even a copy if possible of the document. This also applies to on-line research!!
9. **Don't Jump Straight to the Country of Origin!** Our cultural identity is important today – tracing our ancestors back to their country of origin. It is important to do the work to learn the town or village of origin, when and why they left, how they came here etc. Learning as much as possible before jumping right into research in a foreign country will improve your search results.
10. **Don't Limit Yourself Too Narrowly When Searching Census Data, etc!** It is always worthwhile to check several pages before and after your ancestor's data. There are often clues to other family members living nearby and sometimes also the data on a future spouse's family. Our current experience of having spouses, etc from distant lands is a fairly recent phenomenon. Our ancestors usually married neighbours from the old or new country, cousins, or other family connections.

Searching for our roots is a great way to learn about our families and about our history. Have fun in the search.

THE NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE

We are looking for creative writers; a memoir, historical extracts, and items of interest. Please contact Virginia at 613-836-1556 if you think you have something you'd like to share.

Contact Information

If you need to contact us, please email us at -
goulbournhistoricalsociety@gmail.com

As well, check out our Website at www.goulbournhistoricalsociety.org

THOUGHT TO PONDER

“None are so old as those who have outlived enthusiasm.”

Henry David Thoreau

CHOICES, CHOICES

FOR SOCIETY MEMBERS ONLY!

Bistro 54

is a new restaurant at the Amberwood Golf Club,
and is offering a 10% discount on all regular priced menu items to
all Historical Society members who show their membership card when ordering.
A benefit worth having.

BUT DON'T FORGET THAT

If you eat at the **Broadway Bar and Grill**
in Stittsville and say “Team 396”, the Society
will receive 10% of what you spend. So, everyone,
get out to Broadway and say “Team 396”,
earn us some money and enjoy.

PRESIDENT'S REMARKS

Historical Hijinks

The Historical Society took a break from its regular activities over the summer but participated in a couple of events that were most entertaining. The first was a visit to Bath Ontario on June 30th where a vast panoply of re-enactors recreated the siege of Ernestown (Bath) by American forces during the War of 1812. It was a very colourful event with a large encampment of tents set up near the shore of the St. Lawrence River and all sorts of little shops selling period items, food and souvenirs occupying the park across the road. A replica of the British ship “The Royal George” sailed down the St. Lawrence on its way to Kingston. It was a beautiful sight to see this tall ship under full sail appear on the horizon and then sail by with its Union Jack fluttering in the breeze. After that a mock battle with realistic-looking musket fire took place on shore, followed by a mock battle on the river between British and American troops in replica ships of the era. The crowd took part by booing as the American flag was thrust up the flagpole after the Americans took Bath. (We all knew it would come down again the next day when the British retook Bath from the Americans. “Wait ‘till tomorrow!!” muttered the rowdy spectators.) This

three-day event was hosted by the St. Lawrence Bicentennial Alliance, Canadian Fencibles, Fairfield-Gutzeit Society and the St. Lawrence Parks Commission and it was very much worth the visit. (*To view some photos, visit our website at goulbournhistoricalsociety.org and click on Bath 1812 slideshow*)

The other summer outing was the Society's trip to the Waba Cottage Museum. Although the day started out cloudy and misty, the sky soon turned to blue and the sun came out which made for a beautiful day for the visit. We headed up Highway 417 to Burnstown and had lunch at the "Neat Bistro" and indeed it was neat. It's a former schoolhouse with a plaque on its front but it seemed larger than most schoolhouses I've seen. It's also painted bright blue and has some nice gardens around it. The food was good and the homemade desserts only too tempting but we wrenched ourselves away and drove on the 7 kilometres to the museum. It's a very pretty property set on the shores of White Lake and we were given a special talk on Laird McNab and his antics as the founder of McNab Township by the Curator of the Museum, Jim Austin. Jim was dressed in a kilt and knew his history very well. There happened to be a Victorian Tea on that day as well, so there were a number of costumed men and women strolling around. There were 12 of us on this outing and we all enjoyed the beautiful gardens on the property as well as the talk and the tour of the Museum.

Plaque Unveiling

The unveiling of the historic plaque commemorating the Great Fire of 1870 and the destruction of Old Stittsville is to take place at Villagefest on Saturday September 29th. We will cover this event in our next newsletter, but suffice it to say that the Society's Board members are delighted that we are going ahead with this plaque, and we hope you are too - despite the fact that the Province of Ontario did not see fit to include it as one of their markers.

History Prizes

As is our usual custom we will be awarding a history prize to South Carleton and Sacred Heart High School students and also to Banting Alternate School this fall.

Goulbourn Stained Glass

The Historical Society's book on Goulbourn Stained Glass is now complete and should be available for purchase later in the fall. The book tells the stories of many of the pioneer families of Goulbourn as well as displaying the beautiful stained glass windows that were dedicated to various members of these families. We will be providing details of the cost and how you can purchase this book closer to the time of publication. It will be an unusual and we think, beautiful souvenir of Goulbourn Township.

Barbara Bottriell
President, Goulbourn Township Historical Society

Sackets Harbor Ceremony



The names of six soldiers from Goulbourn's 100th Regiment of Foot were read aloud by Lt.-Col. Rob Duda, commanding officer of the Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry Highlanders, among the war dead honoured at the Sackets Harbor ceremony.

Photo by Kurt Johnson

Goulbourn Goes to Sackets Harbor N.Y.

By Kurt Johnson
Goulbourn Museum Board Member

It was an impressive and solemn ceremony on Aug. 4 honouring the War of 1812 soldiers who had been killed in the Battle of Sackets Harbor. In the farmer's clover field near this resort town in New York State, Americans and Canadians stood together and remembered those fallen soldiers from 200 years ago.

But it was remarkable that this remembrance was for the 49 dead soldiers from the enemy attack force, numbering nearly 900 men aboard six ships that sailed from Kingston to this Lake Ontario port. They were repulsed by American regular troops as well as civilians in the militia.

Goulbourn Museum, which shares the story of Goulbourn's 100th Regiment of Foot, sent me as our representative while William Sinka of Ottawa, represented the Friends of the 100th, a proposed heritage interpretation group for the National Capital Region.

Canadians and Americans were gathered for this international tribute to the Crown Forces which had attacked the U.S. naval base on May 29, 1813. The event was organized by the Sackets Harbor Battlefield State Historic Site; the Sackets Harbor Battlefield Alliance Inc. and the community of Sackets Harbor as part of a War of 1812 commemoration held during the 10th annual Living History Weekend at this national historic site.

Military re-enactors from Canadian and American 1812 living history units had set up encampments under the majestic trees in the battlefield park for the weekend and also staged a mock battle with the noise and smoke (but no bullets) from muskets.

The memorial service was dramatic with the presence of these re-enactors in 1812 costumes bearing arms; Canadian and American regular forces in modern-day uniforms, and civilian or community representatives (some snapping keepsake photos).

But what was most remarkable to me came when Lt.-Col. Rob Duda, commanding officer of the Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry Highlanders, read out each name of 49 Canadian and British soldiers who died on the battlefield and were buried in unknown graves. So six names of grenadiers in the 100th Prince Regent's Regiment of Foot were read aloud -- Sgt. William McGarry, Pte. John Carvin, Pte. James Murphy, Michael O'Brian, Pte. Michael Quinn and Pte. John Short. A regimental piper played a lament while the military men -- 1812 and 2012 -- snapped a salute as American, Canadian and British flags flapped in the welcomed breeze on that hot afternoon.

A ground-breaking ceremony was then held to mark commencement of the construction of a granite monument and individual soldier's stones to honour the sacrifices of the Crown Forces in the battle. We will be back next year on Aug. 3 for the unveiling of the new monument -- Americans and Canadians sharing this heritage and our lasting peace.

DID YOU KNOW

Taken from the book titled "The Real McCoy", (The True Stories Behind Our Everyday Phrases) written by Georgia Hole (2005). Where and what does the phrase "*with an eye for the main chance-on the lookout for an opportunity to take advantage of a situation*" come from and means: The origins of this expression lie in the gambling game of hazard. Though involving only two dice, the game is quite complex, with the chances of a winning throw complicated by various apparently arbitrary rules. In the game, the person about to throw the dice calls out a

number between five and nine. This number is called the main (originally also the main chance), and if they roll the main or a number corresponding to it as specified in the rules, they've won. If they roll two ones, or a two and a one, they've lost. If they do neither of these things, then the number thrown is their 'chance' and they keep on throwing until either this comes up, in which case they're a winner, or the main comes up, and they're a loser. Rolling the main on the first throw is obviously the best chance of winning.

**Recently Published Books of Interest from the
Ontario Historical Society “Bookshelf”**

Hoping for the Best, Preparing for the Worst:

Everyday Life in Upper Canada, 1812 – 1814.

Dorothy Duncan. Published by Dundurn. 248 pages
\$22 softbound. E-book available.

Laura Secord: Heroine of the War of 1812.

Peggy Dymond Leavey. Published by Dundurn.
224 pages. \$20 softbound.

Researching Your Irish Ancestors at Home and Abroad.

David R. Elliott. Dundurn. 224 pages. Illustrations and maps.
\$20 softbound. E-book available.

**Ridgeway: The American Fenian Invasion and the
1866 Battle that made Canada.**

Peter Vronsky. Penguin Group Canada. 394 pages. Illustrations
and maps. \$35 hardbound.

The Avro Arrow: A Picture History.

Lawrence Miller. Publisher James Lorimer.
125 pages. Illustrations. \$10 softbound.

Note: To purchase books contact the publisher directly.

THOUGHTS TO PONDER

Look people in the eye.

Beware of who has nothing to lose.

Never deprive people of hope; it could be the only thing a person owns.

Don't be afraid to say “I don't know” and “I'm sorry.”

Learn how to say “no” courteously and promptly.

Say “please” and “thank you” often.

Be honest, earn people's respect.

LOOKING BACK

This excerpt was found in the Tweedsmuir Book, Farms & Families

THE ALEXANDER FARM – THIRD LINE OF HUNTLEY

Compiled by Mrs. Bertha (Alexander) Desjardin (1964)



Mr. and Mrs. David George Alexander and family, 1905
picture donated by Mr. and Mrs. Lloyd Alexander

left to right: Emma sitting, Valetta, James, Hiram
Willie, Mary, Robert, Bertha, Howard sitting by table
David sitting by father, Cameron standing, Lloyd sitting
by mother

Every history of the early settlers of this part of Goulbourn Township includes the name of Alexander. There were five men of that name who arrived here in 1829. Two brothers, William and Thomas, with their cousins William, Robert and Andrew came from County of Tyrone, Ireland. They settled on the Third Line of Huntley. William and Thomas located farms just across the town line from Goulbourn.

This William Alexander, brother of Thomas, was born in Tyrone, Ireland in 1800 and married Jane Thompson. They had two sons, John and Thomas, when they came to Canada. Six more children were born to these parents after they settled in Huntley. Their names were William, Robert, Samuel,

Martha, Sarah Jane and David George. Thomas married Ellen Courtney, John married Bessie Graham and both couples lived in Listowel. William married Eliza Jane Wright and lived in Carleton Place. Robert and Samuel did not marry, and David George married Ellen Hartin and lived on the Third Line of Huntley.

This pioneer William died in 1878 and is buried in the Presbyterian Cemetery on the Third Line. David George was the youngest son and he related the following story.

About 1840 Henry McBride farmed in Carp and also had a Crown deed for a quantity of swamp land on the Third Line of Huntley.

One day Mr. McBride was in Jackson Stitt's store at Old Stittsville. It was for this Jackson Stitt that Stittsville was named and his store was located at what is now 275 Neil Ave.

Mr. McBride bought three pairs of boots for his family. As he was short of cash he said to Mr. Stitt, "Suppose I give you 100 acres of land I own up the road on the Carp to Ottawa highway." Mr. Stitt agreed, but no deed was made to cover the transaction. So we see that in those early days a man's word was as good as his bond. Later Mr. Stitt sold the land to William Alexander.

David George, William's youngest son, married Ellen Hartin, daughter of James Hartin and his wife, the former Mary James, and took over the farm on the Third Line. When he decided to get a deed for his farm he found it was still in Mr. McBride's name. Mr. McBride at once admitted the sale and made Mr. Alexander a deed directly for five dollars. Thus the property that

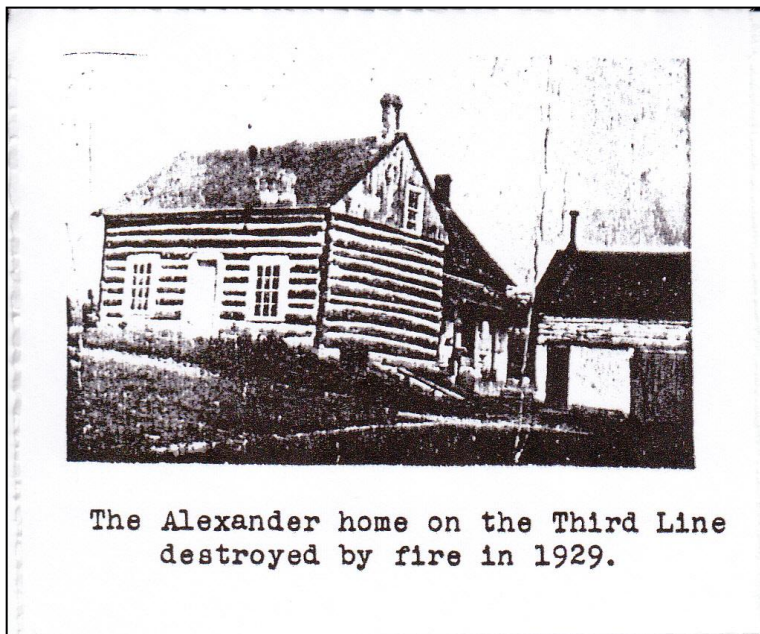
was sold for three pairs of boots is now owned by Lloyd Alexander, youngest son of D.G. and he has among his papers this deed.

The late William Alexander, in the early forties kept a stopping place and operated it for several years during the time when the road via Carp was the chief route to the shanties. Here meals were served to travellers of all sorts – not to speak of the liquid refreshments.

William Alexander was a fiddler of note and during the time he ran the hotel on the Third Line his violin was much in use. He specialized in Irish airs and his favourite was “The Third Line Jig”. He could play about 150 different tunes and each time he played a number he would call out its name to his listeners.

His farm was rocky at the front but back through the swamp was a fine field where he grew wheat as tall as a man’s head. Flat rocks are still seen which were used to make a platform on which to flail the grain. Later the grain was put in sacks and carried half a mile through the swamp to the house.

David George and his wife, the former Ellen Hartin lived on this homestead and had twelve children. Emma married Joseph Davidson of Merivale. Howard married Edna Johnson and lived



at Rosburn, Manitoba. Valetta married George Colbert and lived at Wakefield, Quebec. Bertha married William Desjardin and their home was in Ottawa. Robert John married Elizabeth Hamilton and lived in Rosburn, Manitoba. Hiram did not marry. William married Ruby Smith and lives in Stittsville. James married Bernice McLean and lives in Stittsville. David did not marry. Mary became John Davidson’s wife and lived in Merivale. Cameron married Edna Johnson and went to Liverpool, N.Y. Lloyd married Ida Bradley and lives on the home farm.

Mr. David Alexander liked to boast of the fine young women who were raised between Stittsville and

Carp. “They were brought up on corn meal and the Shortest Catechism”. They were handsome and healthy and great housekeepers and men came from many parts to take them away as wives. Mr. Alexander, when in his 84th year, complained that the girls of that day were all right but their minds were ‘too full of store catalogues and automobiles’.

One story Mr. Alexander liked to tell of his boyhood happened in 1860. Dennis Hogan who lived on the Third Line decided he would go to Ottawa to see the Prince of Wales lay the corner stone of the Parliament Buildings. As the roads were bad, Mr. Hogan was going to ride to town on horseback. As he was afraid that the ‘good yard and stabling’ of the Ottawa hotels would be overtaxed by the crowds in town for the event he did not wish to take his horse into the city. He arranged to get David Alexander, age 11, the son of a neighbour, to go with him on another horse and bring the two horses back. Early in the morning of the day, Dennis Hogan and young David stared off together from the Third Line. When the pair reached John Thompson’s farm (on the

Richmond Road and later known as McKellar Townsite) Mr. Hogan said, “Now, Davey my boy, this is close enough to the city for you to come. I think you had better go back and I will walk the rest of the way”.

Young Davey would have liked to see the “Big City” but he turned back leading the second horse. As he was starting Mr. Hogan said, “Davey, my boy, here is ten cents for you”. To Dave the ten cents looked like a fortune. He thanked Mr. Hogan for his generosity (potatoes cost 25 cents a bag). When he reached Bells Corners he tied the horses to the verandah post at Mr. Arnold’s store and went in and bought five cents worth of candy.

When he reached home his trip was a big event to tell his friends. He had not gone into town but he was able to tell them all about the busy place where he had shopped, Bell’s Corners, and none of them had ever seen Bell’s Corners.

Mr. and Mrs. Alexander enjoyed many active years. When the corner stone was laid for the present Orange Hall he gave a humorous account of the lodge’s history. At ninety-one he was still chopping wood and working in the garden. He still started his day by getting up at 6 a.m. and his wife, then about eighty years of age was busy about the house. He died in 1941.

In 1929 the log house that was home to this active family and had been a stopping place was destroyed by fire. It was replaced by the present frame house. Lloyd now lives on the farm with his wife and their four children, Ruth, Ann (Mrs. Ronald Moore), Hiram and Fern.

NEWS AND VIEWS

The Anglican Parish of Huntley, Christ Church, will be celebrating its 175th anniversary next year (1838-2013). The Huntley Township Historical Society held a fundraiser on Sept. 5th to help them prepare for the celebrations. The Huntley Society's next meeting will feature a tour of Lee Valley Tools on Morrison Drive in Ottawa on October 16th.

Yosuf Karsh Exhibit at the City of Ottawa Archives, 100 Tallwood Drive is on from September 18 to October 31st.

The Historical Society of Ottawa has just issued a new pamphlet in its Bytown Pamphlet series on “Robert Bell, A Man for All Seasons”. These pamphlets can be purchased from the Historical Society of Ottawa by calling 613 234-4846 or mailing your request to Box 523, Stn. B, Ottawa, ON K1P 5P6

Thought to Ponder

... the positive side of life ...

Don’t cry because it’s over; smile because it happened.

Some mistakes are too much fun to only make once.

*** A truly happy person is one who can enjoy the scenery on a detour.***

*****RECIPES*****

OTTAWA'S REPAST

150 Years of Food and Drink

Celebrating the 150th Anniversary of the Ottawa Citizen (October 1995)

by Kathleen Walker – Ottawa Citizen Food Editor

This book is really two books in one. It can be read as a story, a social history revolving around food in the Ottawa Valley and surrounding area from the time of the fur traders to the present day. It is also a cookbook celebrating some of the best this area has to offer.

AUNT ALICE'S PORRIDGE BREAD

2 cups rolled oats	¾ cup molasses	2 packages yeast
1 tablespoon salt	Butter the size of	8 to 9 cups flour
4 cups boiling water	an egg	(half white and half
	1 cup warm water	whole wheat)

Cook the rolled oats and salt in the boiling water for 2 minutes. Remove from heat and add the molasses and the butter. Let cool. Dissolve the yeast in 1 cup of warm water (using the molasses cup.) Add the yeast to the porridge mixture and then add the flour. Mix thoroughly. The dough should be sticky.

Place the dough in a warm place and let rise 1 hour. Punch down and shape into 3 loaf tins and let rise again for an hour.

Bake in a 350° oven for 1 hour.

Makes 3 loaves.

THE NEXT TWO ARTICLES COME FROM THE SAME BOOK AS THE RECIPE. THIS BOOK HAS BEEN A MARVELOUS FIND AND I'M ENJOYING READING IT AND THRILLED TO PASS ON A FEW OF THE STORIES AND RECIPES. MANY THANKS TO G.T.H.S. MEMBER GEORGIA DERRICK FOR LOANING HER COPY TO ME.

SUNDAY AT THE PARKS

Candy bars, creamy rich ice-cream cones and glasses of lemonade were the kinds of sweets hard-working Ottawans treated themselves to on leisurely Sunday afternoons at Britannia-on-the-Bay and Queen's Park in Aylmer, Quebec. Opened within a year of each other at the turn of the century, the parks were the brainchild of the Ottawa Electric Railway Company and the Hull Electric Tramway Company.

In competition, the parks shared similar philosophies; they were designed to attract the members of Ottawa's working population who didn't have large incomes and substantial properties. Store clerks and government clerks used to tram during the week to get to and from work; now they could ride it on the weekend to entertain themselves at Britannia, Queen's and Rockcliffe parks. After all, the rides were an affordable nickel a ride or six for a quarter.

On June 29, 1891, Thomas Ahearn drove the first of four electric trams out of the Ottawa Electric Street Railway Co. headquarters on Albert Street with Mayor Thomas Birkett on board. The trams went down Bank Street and into the countryside as far as the

exhibition grounds at Lansdowne Park, where the rail line ended. Within nine years, the rail lines would criss-cross the city.

One line went up Sussex Drive to Rockcliffe Park, which was a popular destination, especially after 1887 when the governor general's brother-in-law, Lord Frederick Hamilton, introduced skiing to residents of the nation's capital. Another line started on Theodore Street (now Laurier Avenue East) in Sandy Hill, and continued down Wellington Street, along Richmond Road, passing such country estates as Maplelawn, to the very rural community of Britannia on the Ottawa River. This line opened on Victoria Day, 1900; the handsome oak-finished cars carried almost 15,000 people to the park that day, where they were entertained by a military band as they picnicked on the grass.

Across the Ottawa, just west of Aylmer, was Queen's Park. It too was reached by tram, the line running along the river bank, past the then popular (now defunct) Connaught Race Track, through Aylmer to the park.

Britannia and Queen's Park never appealed to Ottawa's social elite, who preferred to summer in the Eastern Townships or the Maritimes. Their parties were ultra-exclusive, and from most reports, quite tedious, with the same faces showing up for tableaux, dinners, afternoon teas, skating, skiing, tobogganing parties, and canoe rides down the Ottawa. Even when Rideau Hall's very proper steward, Charles Ruggles (always referred to only by his last name) was first asked to make martinis in the mid-1920's, it was strictly for the younger, fun-loving members of the household, says Robert Hubbard in his illustrated history of Rideau Hall.

Those who built clapboard summer cottages at Britannia were primarily merchants



Britannia Clubhouse, 1900

and local government officials such as Fred Graham of the Bryson Graham firm on Sparks Street, shoe merchant Robert Masson, Rosenthal, the jeweller, manufacturer William Howe, former Mayor Fred Cook, A.P. Sherwood, commissioner of the Dominion Police Department, stove and tinware dealer Joseph Esmonde, and A.S. Woodburn, a prominent local printer.

By the mid-1890's, Britannia had a two-storey yacht club with a wide verandah overlooking the Ottawa River. There were about thirty summer homes and in their midst was the fashionable Château von Charles, run by a widow, Frederica Alexandra de Vallier von Charles who had come to Ottawa from

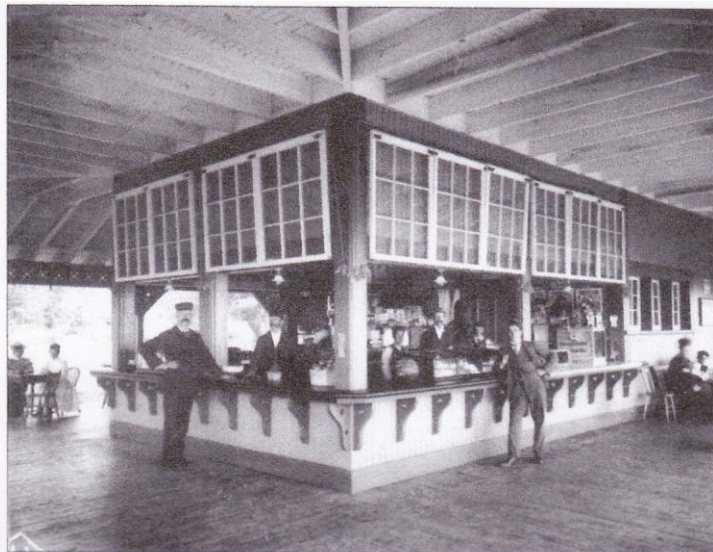
Paris after the Franco-Prussian War. A popular spot, the château was booked well in advance for every summer season, note Eva Taylor and James Kennedy in *Ottawa's Britannia* published in 1983 by the Britannia Historical Association. On weekends, local cottagers, dressed in their best Sunday finery, often dined in the hotel's elegantly appointed dining room.

By the early 1900's, with the tram companies running the parks, Britannia and Queen's Park offered Ottawans more than just fresh air. Britannia had a 1,000-foot-long pier with an enormous gabled pavilion at one end. There was swimming at the sand beach, boating, strawberry socials and picnics, vaudeville shows, touring stock companies, moving pictures and animal acts. Once a week, a military band would meet for a few 'snorts' at the Bodega Hotel on Wellington Street, then board a special open-air streetcar and play on and off all the way out to Britannia, where the band would put on a concert.

In *The Hub and The Spokes*, published in 1904, American author Anson Gard wrote that 'the Britannia trip is one of the most enjoyable outings about Ottawa. It reminds me of the runout from Brooklyn, passing down the bay to Coney Island. You take the car on Sparks Street, either marked Britannia or Somerset Street. Somerset is well paved and with its pretty rows of shade trees, neat detached houses, and nice lawns, surely a pleasant sight.' He also noted that the effects of the 1900 fire, which had destroyed much of Hull as well as Ottawa's west and south ends, were still visible along the route that went beside the Richmond Road, past several of the fine Georgian-style stone homes along the Ottawa River.

The atmosphere at Queen's Park had some of the feel of Coney Island, said Gard. The eighty-acre park, he wrote, was 'well-shaded by pretty cedars and pines' and was 'rolling and picturesque.' 'Here', he added, 'you can ride the chutes and listen to the laughter of children in the merry-go-round.'

There were also a roller-skating rink, a scenic railway, moving pictures, swimming from a shale beach, boating, band concerts, a performing bear, a house of mirrors, and a



Refreshment stand, Queen's Park, Aylmer, 1910

Mystic Moorish Maze with 124 doors to get lost in. Like Britannia, Queen's Park had a busy refreshment booth serving iced sweets and thirst-quenching lemonades.

But most people picnicked on the grass, bringing along hampers filled with veal and ham pie, crustless tea sandwiches filled with potted meats or thinly-sliced cucumber, a variety of the family's favorite condiments and preserves, pound cake, butter tarts (a

Canadian creation), ginger cookies and gingerbread, cake-like doughnuts and shortbread. These were the foods most Canadians of English background preferred for tea.

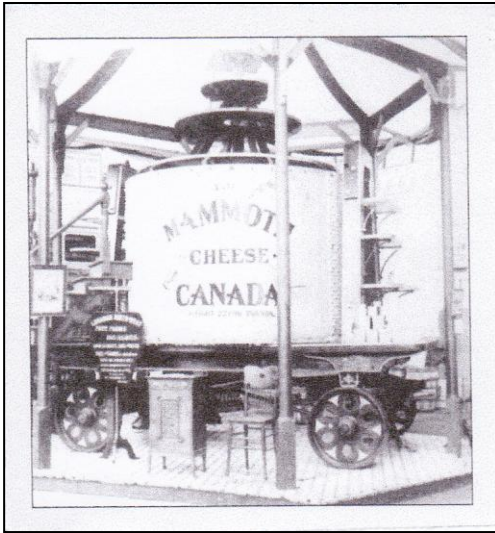
Britannia and Queen's Park also served as gateways to the upper Ottawa River. Steamboats such as the *G.B. Greene*, which had a spacious restaurant, offered scenic rides to Fitzroy Harbour and advertised these outings as "Half a Day for Half a Dollar."

Both parks began to decline after the First World War. Queen's Park went more quickly, closing in the 1920's to make way for cottages. Britannia lingered. A fire in August, 1918, destroyed the Britannia Boating Club's premises, and momentum to rebuild and modernize most of the park's attractions was never regained.

But the old auditorium in Britannia Park continued to attract audiences. Given a dance floor in the 1920's, the building had a new lease on life and Britannia was alive with the sounds of the jazz era. During the Dirty Thirties, with such bands as Mac Turner and Babe Giddons, Britannia was still, said one local resident, 'a place where a guy could take a girl out for 50 cents, including soft drinks and car-fare, for a night of fun and dancing.'

CHEESE WAS BIG

In April, 1893, an enormous round of cheddar cheese weighing 22,000 pounds was loaded on a flat car at Perth's train station. Known as Perth's Mammoth Cheese. It was made from the milk of 10,000 cows and was destined for display at the Chicago World's



Fair. By the time the train carrying the Mammoth Cheese had reached Havelock near Peterborough, four truss rods on the flat car had broken. When the cheese was finally installed in the Canadian exhibit at the fair it promptly crashed through the floor.

Nevertheless, the cheese won top awards not only for its girth but for flavor, texture and color; these medals are on display at the Perth Museum.

After remaining at the fair for the summer, the cheese was purchased by British tea importer Sir Thomas Lipton. Unfortunately, it was confined for weeks in the damp hold of a ship which resulted in the outer twelve inches becoming mouldy. Lipton rejected the cheese, which was eventually purchased by a London caterer. After removing the mould, four men with garden shovels stood on top of the cheese digging out samples for tasting. It was pronounced delicious. One large chunk was shipped back to Canada and distributed to members of the House of Commons, the Senate and the Press Gallery.

"The Development of the Cheese Industry", by Edward Moore, Consuming Passions, edited by Dorothy Duncan and Glenn Lockwood (Ontario Historical Society, Willowdale 1989

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