

OUR STORIES



*The Eastern Townships' chapter
in Canada's 150-year story*

Townshippers' Association

Our Stories

The Eastern Townships Chapter
in Canada's 150-year story

*By members & supporters of the
Eastern Townships community*

&

Townshippers' Association

OUR STORIES:
THE EASTERN TOWNSHIPS CHAPTER
IN CANADA'S 150-YEAR STORY



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(Estrie) 100-257 Queen, Sherbrooke, QC J1M 1K7 Canada
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450-242-4421, toll-free: 1-877-242-4421.

EDITORIAL TEAM: Kyl Chhatwal, Melanie Cutting, Jan Draper

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Dedicated to:

The Townshippers who came before,

who are here today,

& who are yet to come.

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FOREWORD



Jan Draper was born in the Eastern Townships and has spent most of her life here; Melanie Cutting has lived here since 1972, so has spent virtually all her adult life in the Townships; and Kyl Chhatwal moved here from Ontario just a couple of years ago. Thus, we bring many perspectives to bear on this collection celebrating the Eastern Townships' role in Canada's sesquicentennial story. Ultimately, this project— including the many writing workshops we hosted, another aspect of this endeavour— became a labour of love for all of us.

When Townshippers' Association put out the call for submissions for *Our Stories*, contributors were asked for writing, artwork, and photography that relates in some way to the four following themes:

The historical roots of our region;
The experience of settlers in our region;
Our community's role in shaping the nation;
Contributions made by individuals & our community
to both the provinces and the country.

Of course, we were thrilled to receive plenty of pieces on early pioneers and settlers. We were equally excited by the contributors who interpreted ideas like “history” and “settlement” in their own ways. Indeed, sharing a variety of voices was our principal criterion in selecting these works.

Within these pages, you'll find contributions from Townshippers of all ages, beginner and experienced writers and artists alike, and even people who have moved away from the Townships but still feel deeply connected to it. You'll find poetry, memoir, photography, visual art, satire, essays, short fiction, and all sorts of other strange and surprising genres. The wide spectrum of people willing to tell their stories in myriad ways surprised and delighted us, and is ultimately the strength of this publication.

A note on layout: in reviewing all these many-voiced submissions, we noticed important links between them. There were those concerned with movement; those with place; those with family; those with work and livelihood; and finally, those that challenge our everyday perspectives. In a loose and rather intuitive way, we decided to organize this collection of works into five sections: Migrations, Home, Work, Generations, and Reflections. After a great deal of time spent reading, reviewing and editing the submissions, we found that grouping the works in this way added to the appreciation of them. We hope the same is true for you.

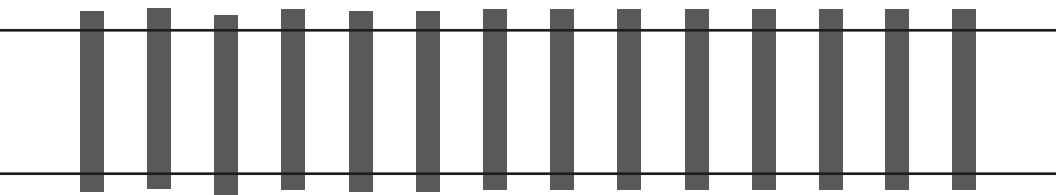
We are fortunate to live in the Townships, the beauty and variety of which so greatly enriches all of our lives. We are also fortunate to have access to an organization such as Townshippers' that finds ways to celebrate our heritage and culture. This anthology represents not just the story of the Townships, but of Canada. We thank all the vibrant and creative students we met in our writing workshops as well as other members of the community for their involvement and contribution to this unique project.

The Editorial Team

Kyl Chhatwal

Melanie Cutting

Jan Draper



—MIGRATIONS—



Steam locomotives

A pair of locomotives under full steam attack
the steep grade out of Cookshire, circa 1954.

Winston Fraser

Train Trilogy

Janice LaDuke

Part I: The Truth About Trains

And the trains go slowly by my window... all day long. They clunk and they shunt, clang bang back'ards and for'ards, back'ards and for'ards, ca-tunk! They go north, they go south.

Sometimes, at the end of my working day, the store locked up and the "Closed" sign in the window, I'll be walking out to my car and a train will go rattling by. I'll see the engineer sitting up in his high seat, his tanned forearm resting on the window ledge, and sometimes he'll wave to me, and I'll wave back to him. As I wend my way home, I'll cross those very same tracks three times, maybe four times, and sometimes I'll have to stop for that very train once, twice, thrice...

These trains punctuate my day with their hoots and their whistles and their rumbling lumbering passing. They're going somewhere far, far away, passing through woods and fields, cutting through deep sheltered valleys and cuts that nobody else sees, unless you happen to travel on one of those trains. They see things that we don't see from roads or from houses. Rumbling on through the dark of night, whistling their approach to tiny gravelled crossings where the ties shimmy and shake, where it's steel-on-steel and rusted spikes and a deer caught in the blinding one-eyed headlight.

I spend my days examining books, buying books, cleaning books, researching books, pricing books, even selling a few, and

the trains come, the trains go, great mammoth creatures that do as they're bid, follow the tracks, hoot out their warnings and their greetings, steady, good company, just passing through.

The trains go slowly by, and I... I bid them well.

Part II: The Johnville Train

When we jumped that train in Johnville, I thought we were heading south. Seems I'd neglected to ask. Hiram said, "Let's go!" and we did. So, we didn't go south but east, which was fine with me. I'd had enough of the farms and the mines. Wanted to see some place new. Weren't nothing holding me here but habit.

That was in the spring of '09. My folks had both passed on in '05. Bad winter that was. Pneumonia took them both. I got family hereabout. A sister up in Eustis and two brothers over to Brompton, but they're fixed with young'uns and all. I'd not seen much of 'em since our folks' funeral four years back.

We rode that train three days afore it creaked into Calais, Maine. We'd thought to get off sooner but guessed we slept through the border into the States. We had a little coal fire burning in a tin can. Hiram thought to bring that along. I had a jar of whiskey and this other fellow came aboard somewhere, he had some sourdough that we traded some whiskey for.

This other fellow had a ukulele along with him too and he could plunk away on that thing right pretty. I 'member waking up one morning to see the sky all aglow through the crack where the door didn't quite close. Thought at first there was a fire out there. I slid across the floor and gave that door a shove, sent it clanging bang open, and it wasn't no fire at all.

What it was, was the dawning. Never seen one like it before. Red and streaked with gold and these trees silhouetted black against it. Then this bird, a lark, coulda been, it takes wing and I could hear it singing over the creak-clatter-clickety-clack racket

of them iron wheels on them iron rails. I could hear that little bird a-singing away for all he's worth.

I stood there, jest staring out into the morning and then there's Mr. Meloche, the fellow with the ukulele, standing at my elbow and he starts into singing too, jest like that darn bird, I swear. Singing away 'bout the good Lord and heaven above and I couldn't tell you if it was Sunday or not but you know, I sure felt holy as church, standin' there in that wide open doorway, hanging onto the door, and Mr. Meloche plucking away on his uke and singing sweet as ever you could wish.

I peered back into the corner to see if Hiram could see this sight and at first I couldn't make 'im out no how. Then, I take a step into the shadow there, and I can see 'im, setting there in the corner with his knees raised up and his head tucked down. I gave the toe of his boot there a nudge and he puts one hand up and jams his hat down lower over his eyes, like some snail backing into his shell, so I leave him be. Figure he'll have to catch heaven some other day.

I shifted back into the doorway and there's a smudge of gold now where the sun's working its way up to the horizon. Mr. Meloche has stopped his playing. He's jest standin' there, holding that uke by the neck, staring out at the sky, real loose-like, his legs spread apart and jest riding the rails like he was born to it.

That's when he started into talking 'bout his wife. How he lost her, and their baby both 'bout three months ago, near as I could make out. A fire, I guess it was. He talked about 'em both as if they were right there before us. Talkin' soft as if they was asleep in the corner there with Hiram and he didn't want to wake 'em up.

I listened and we watched that sun come up and I thought how I'd never take a wife no how. There's jest too much pain and sorrow that way lays.

Part III: Truth to Tell

Truth from fiction. Fiction from truth. Truth from reality. Reality from fiction. Where do my narrator's daughters stop being my own? My narrator's husband, my own? Writing from what is deep down, without exposing all, without telling where the truth lies—the line between truth and fiction, reality and truth. For there is a line, and only I know where it is. Sometimes, truth to tell, I am not sure.

The truth of a hurried supper after a long day of sorting bills, filing papers, answering questions, making calls, how do I find this? What do I do now? A day of talk of thousands of dollars—put some here, put some there, take a few hundred from here and put them there, and what about this one? It needs a little more! Bookshop talk, business talk... Then home to a hurried supper of lentil soup because it's the day before payday and the bank's overdrawn and no, you cannot have your allowance early.

Time ticks on by, the stillness thick with my own uncertainty. This is reality, but is it the truth? A day of letters and emails and high falutin' talk? Surely not the truth.

Where is the line? The train line that crosses College Street. The train that passed just before I reached the tracks, where was it going? To Saint John, New Brunswick, of course. Straight across that northward thrusting point of Maine, straight through the woods aglow with colour, peppered with animal tracks, antlers interlaced with the bare branches of trees. The lakes and rivers, not iced over yet but waiting, anticipating, lying still as if practicing to be ice set in for the long haul. The ducks and geese mostly gone now, only a few lone stragglers, the reluctant ones. Not wanting to leave these woods now so quiet, so still, so full of light with the foliage on the ground. A pair of loons, business as usual, their calls shattering the stillness.

Truth.

I could jump on that train as it clatters by. But maybe I'll go home first and fill the big canvas pack, bring the canoe and paddles down to the tracks, hide it all in the bushes just a little way along and off the road. Then I'd be ready. When the train slows down, screeches

and grinds to a halt, I'd stow it all aboard, just like in those days of old when men really did such things. The train whistle will blow, the wheels begin to roll once more, and all that will be left behind is a flattened disk of copper, the maple leaf gone but the colour about right.

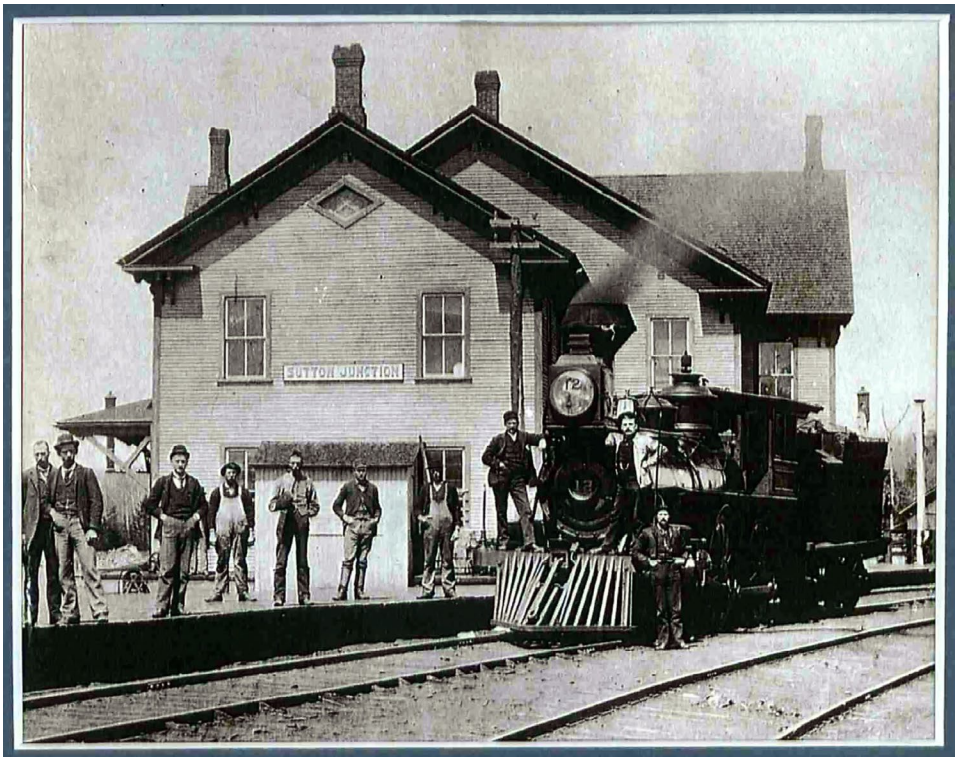
Then off to Maine, and maybe this is the truth. Maybe that train will clackety-clack right past my daughter as she's walking home from school and I'll wave to her from the open door of that freight car and she'll come running along beside the tracks. She'll be grinning, holding her gloved hand up to me, and I'll reach down, grab her hand and swing her up. She'll go with me into the woods and together we'll paddle about, watch the loons' antics, watch the moose watch us between mouthfuls of drippy green stuff, watch the deer with eyes as round and brown as hers, my daughter's. It won't be too cold, the wood will always burn, the tent will always stay dry.

We'll meet an old woman gathering roots. She'll invite us to her cabin where she'll feed us and make us welcome. Her name might be Muriel. We'll stay with her for three days. Then the first snow will fall, ice will start to form like lace 'round the edges of the lakes, and we'll think about going home.

My daughter will jump out first and ease the canoe to the ground as I slide it out the open door of the freight car. Then I'll throw out the pack and jump down, startling the snow where it lies thin and cold, as the wheels of that train grind into motion once more.

Home again, I'll find that my younger daughter is past that stage now and she's happy to see us. The bills will have learned their independence and will be taking care of themselves, and my husband won't even have missed us. And maybe this... maybe this is the truth.

Train at Sutton Junction



Donald Hector Martin, great-grandfather of Donald Martin, standing on the right side of the wood-burning locomotive of the South Eastern Railroad No. 12 named "Farnham," of which he was the engineer. The Engine had a coal oil headlamp, link and pin couplings, and only air brakes on the engine. The picture is taken around 1885 at Sutton Junction, Quebec. Donald Hector Martin was the oldest engineer on the Eastern Division of the CPR at the time of his retirement, and it is believed that he fired the first locomotive to cross the Victoria Bridge in Montreal. They ran a special train from Farnham to Waterloo when he died. There were CPR officials, and brotherhood and Masonic members onboard the train. Donald Hector Martin is buried in the Anglican cemetery in Waterloo.

Don Martin

The National Dream

Christine Aspinall

When the country was young and men had to be tough,
Food was scarce and the living was rough.
Most people thought of the "National Dream"
As fairytale stuff, an impossible scheme.

But the men of faith and forward vision,
Took the major step, made the final decision.
To build the great railroad through hill and down dale,
To the mighty Pacific with sleek, shining rail.

The trials and the hardships, so many untold,
Left undaunted the men of this effort so bold.
There were characters many, some of great wealth,
Some lived by their wits, others gained by their stealth.

And slowly, so slowly, by hammer and nail,
Brave men laid the track through deluge and gale.
By pick and by shovel they inched their way through,
The passes were fearsome, but the trail laid was true.

By giving their finest, their hardworking best,
They finally reached their goal to the West.
A ne'er-ending thread, stretched quicksilver bright,
From the dawning of day through the pitch black of night.

The railway united the country and then,
The great trains transported both produce and men.
And so ends the saga of the "iron machine,"
That transformed to reality the "National Dream."

1925 Star Superior



This Star car was originally bought by Mrs. Wilson, grandmother of Donald A. Martin, Sr. in Granby, Quebec. It is interesting to note that in those days the garage was built before the car was bought. The Wilson Family Homestead was still standing until April, 2000, as well as the cedar single-car garage, on East Hill above Brome. presently owned by Donald Martin, Jr. of Melbourne, Ontario, the car has been in the Brome Fair on different occasions, as well as in many weddings and parades. It is all original and in good running order.

Don Martin

Our Beautiful Townships: Our Best Kept Secret

Sheryl Taylor

This article tells the stories of six strong, resilient, and talented women who have helped shape our little Shangri-La, the Eastern Townships. They are not pioneers from centuries past, but women living in the Townships today, who have all moved here from somewhere else, and in doing so, have made a lasting contribution to Townships life and culture.

While interviewing each of these women, I asked them the question: “How in the heck did you end up here?” The stories they told are all charming and surprising, and I decided they simply **must** be shared.

So, reader...read on!

Penny

My first interviewee is Penny Murray, whom I met when I first began teaching for the Eastern Townships School Board (ETSB) nearly 20 years ago. There were many things about Penny that I instantly liked—her pluckiness, kindness, no-nonsense personality, and of course, her wonderful sense of humour.

Penny was born in England and immigrated to Canada as a very young child, settling with her family in Pointe-Claire, Quebec. Her boyfriend while growing up, Michael Murray, had a grandmother who lived in Sutton. When he brought Penny to the

Townships for the first time on a ski vacation, she instantly fell in love with the region.

As young newlyweds, she and Michael bought an old stone house in Frelighsburg, despite the fact that the house had no water, nearby neighbours, or electricity (*not even hydro poles!*). The couple lived with Penny's parents in the city while their dream home was being renovated. After moving at last to Frelighsburg, Penny immersed herself in Townships life: raising bees, chickens, geese, even a donkey. She grew her own vegetables and has since become an expert canner. They have lived in this same stone house for nearly 50 years, and have raised their children here, all of whom are now grown and settled in the Townships themselves. In fact, her daughter Jody is in charge of computer programming at the ETSB, and her husband Michael has been an ETSB school commissioner for many years. One generation continuing the work of the last... a true Townships tradition!

When I asked Penny to sum up the region in a few words, she answered, "Peace, tranquility, closeness to nature, fresh air, community, space to garden, have pets, and be self-sufficient. And very little traffic!"

She also used the word "Shangri-La," which I thought was perfectly fitting. *The Eastern Townships, our Shangri-La*. So, I've decided to use this word throughout the rest of my little article.

Thanks for the inspiration, Penny!

Laura H.

My second interviewee is yoga instructor, Laura Hernandez. Laura was born in Mexico and worked for over 14 years at a Canadian Embassy, where she had an exceptional and rewarding career, travelling and meeting all sorts of fabulous people.

One of those people was her future partner, Pierre. At that time, Mexico wasn't a particularly safe place to live, and in the city it was difficult to connect with nature, a need Laura felt keenly.

So at last, Pierre and Laura decided to take an enormous leap of faith and move to Lac-Brome, Quebec, where Pierre's parents

owned a health spa and were looking to retire. Thus, Laura arrived in our little Shangri-La, not knowing anyone, and having to adapt not just to one but two new cultures.

Talk about culture shock! But Laura immediately fell in love with the natural beauty of the area. She and Pierre had a son, Simon, and following his birth, Laura began practicing yoga in Montreal, with the goal of becoming a yoga teacher. When she decided to open her own yoga centre—Yoga & Mouvement—Lac-Brome was the obvious place to do it.

Her centre is now an integral part of the Lac-Brome community, and over 200 students a year practice there. Laura offers detoxifying workshops at the start of every season, gives courses on essential oils, and has invited many guest lecturers and practitioners to visit. The centre is now a soaring success, and Laura has certainly carved out a place for herself here in Shangri-La. We are more than pleased that she chose to make her home here.

Ginette & Carole

The next two women I will introduce are fairly new arrivals, but have a fascinating story to tell nonetheless. Ginette Couture and Carole Goulet both had bustling careers in social work and education in Montreal. The Townships had always been part of their lives, on summer and winter vacations, but the couple certainly never considered themselves Townshippers.

Until one day they saw their dream house for sale on prime real estate in the village of Knowlton, and decided to buy on the spot, retiring 10 years earlier than planned! They weren't sure how easily their Montreal house would sell. But it ended up going in only 10 days—a clear sign they were meant to be residents of Shangri-La.

Since settling here, they have immersed themselves in community life: Ginette as president of the Optimists Club, and Carol as a member of the Village Reads program. They are part of a local environmental group, as well as an organization that

maintains walking trails. What the couple loves most about life here is the keen sense of community. When asked to describe the Townships in a few words, they responded: “Tight-knit, yet open, super-welcoming, family- and community-oriented, generous, kind and helpful.”

Renalee

One woman I simply had to interview for this article was the visionary Renalee Gore, Principal of Knowlton Academy. I first met Renalee when she’d just started her career as Principal at Butler Elementary in Bedford. Even in those early years, she was making waves as a forward-thinking leader with the energy and ambition to make a serious difference in the lives of her students. She secured an Indigo Grant for \$150,000 for three years, as well as a Juno Grant to buy Yamaha pianos and brass instruments for the music department. Money for new school playground equipment followed, a feat she repeated at her next job at Waterloo Elementary, and finally at Knowlton Academy, where she is Principal today.

A long-time volunteer at Butler, Faye Hamilton, worked with Renalee for many years and characterized her as “a force of nature... so wonderful at tracking the available grants and going after them.”

The event that best sums up Renalee’s extraordinary leadership was the time she managed to bring a professional circus to Butler. Called “Circus of the Kids,” this travelling group of circus performers gave workshops to spellbound Butler students on everything from being a trapeze artist to a Ringmaster. Faye also recalls this time, praising Renalee for “taking marginalized students and making them into stars.”

Like the other women in this article, Renalee is not a Townshipper by birth, but was raised in Montreal and educated in Vancouver. Her husband at the time, Laurie, had ties to the Townships. We are certainly fortunate our visionary Renalee Gore decided to make our little Shangri-La home.

Laura T.

The last (*but not least*) modern pioneering woman whom I simply must introduce hardly needs an introduction: Laura Teasdale, Lac-Brome's resident playwright and Thespian, who has built herself quite a reputation, not just in the Townships, but across the province.

A native of Antigonish, Nova Scotia, Laura came to Montreal in her early 20s to study drama at Concordia University. Her talents were quickly noticed by Nick Pynes, director of Knowlton Theatre, who convinced her to move to the Townships. And thank goodness he did!

The first performance I ever saw Laura in was "Honky Tonk Blues," with the talented Ralph Steiner. I was instantly sold on Laura. Not only is she an enormously skilled performer, she's also a real class act. Currently, she imparts her theatre knowledge to young students in the ETSB, where she teaches. In her off-time, she sings with her band, *The Lovely Brothers*, puts on regular dinner theatre shows, and of course, writes critically acclaimed plays.

When I asked our local songbird Ms. Teasdale how she would she describe the Townships, she replied, "Welcoming, beautiful, mystical and quirky"—which I think sums up the area quite well. Not surprising, of course, from such an obviously gifted wordsmith. Laura loves to write from a sense of place, and what better PLACE than the Eastern Townships, our Shangri-La!

Well, this is the end of my little series of interviews. I hope you learned something new about the trailblazing pioneers still living among us. Thank you to my six subjects: it was a pleasure to get to know you all better. And thank you to Townshippers' Association, for this wonderful opportunity to tell our stories on the occasion of Canada's 150th birthday!

Home





First Frame House

A family poses in front of the first frame house in Eaton Township, taken in Cookshire, circa 1898.

Winston Fraser

11 Winter Observations

Frank Willdig

1.

In this
tree a crow
sits perched with his yellow eye
so full of winter.

2.

There are ice etchings
feathering the window panes;
deep in morning gold.

3.

She boils water
for her tea on a wood stove
and fills her tin mug.

4.

Winter comes scented,
pure and fresh like the chilled air
and sweet cedar wood.

5.

Winds scrape a leafless
landscape, smoke and snow obscure
the well and woodpile.

6.

The loudest sound is
the crunch of snow underfoot
and the dog's hard breath.

7.

On a homeward walk
there's a cream-coloured sunset
and a hockey pond.

8.

The white birches are
whiter still, flaming upward
like heatless candles

9.

A silence at night,
broken by the sound of trains,
that never arrive.

10.

A warm fireplace,
comfy sweaters and moonlight
and our friends nearby.

11.

Warm bodies, cold bed
Orion in the window;
Sunrise far from here.

Wheel of Fortune

Yann Geoffroy

“Come lay with me, dear.”

“Ok, Grammy.”

The TV, black and white, shows a wheel with dollar signs and numbers on it. Glittering boxes are turned by a glittering lady, tall and curvy, walking like a sexy alien. Vanna White. Her smile is knowing and affable; so super sweet it makes me want to be in the TV with her. The letters she reveals baffle my grandmother but she is in it for Pat and Vanna, not the game.

“I love you, dear,” she says, putting an arm on me as I snuggle next to her.

“I love you too, Grammy.”

“Just look at that Pat. He’s such a rascal.”

Grammy smells good. Like Vicks VapoRub, dough and tea. She only drinks King Cole orange pekoe. Her hair is dark and curly with a grey streak up from nearly the centre of her forehead like a skunk would have. It makes her look mischievous, like a cartoon.

“Tell me about Syria,” I say.

“Oh dear, you fellas woulda loved it, it was so beautiful. My father had a fig orchard. We would pick figs right out of the trees. So fresh. You can’t get them like that here. Here in Dunham it’s all apples.”

I hate figs but I imagine they would be good out of a tree. Then I think that wasps might lay eggs in them because their crunchy seeds pop like little wasp exoskeletons. There are wasps in the roof of our house. There are squirrels too.

“And my father; he let me take care of the orchard.” Her skin is soft and freckled, her teeth white and straight. But she is just so swollen, my Grammy. She is just so swollen. I try to imagine

her as a little girl—running around in a dry, scrubby fig orchard, all by herself, friendless and forgotten, but I can't. She is an immovable sack full of fluid, love, and laughter that rolls like the sea.

"My father, Moses, put the cornerstone in the village church in *Djede Artuz*. I miss it. But my legs," she says.

"They hurt, Grammy?"

"Oooh, you fellas don't know." That's how she always begins, but then she forgets her pain.

"You're so bad, Pat," she giggles at the small black-and-white TV under the rabbit ears. "Oooh, that Pat Sajak, what he's doin' now?"

She is not really talking to me. She is talking to the TV. I like to also. I look past her, through the window by her bed, and into the woods that surround our house on the 10th Range. I wonder what Ottawa is. What it means. Grammy's home is there with Grandpa Vic. Grandpa Vic drinks rum-and-cokes at the Legion and smokes Craven A while reading spy novels. Grammy hates him because she says he holds his toast flat in the air upon three fingers like an upside-down tripod. He holds a Craven A with the same three fingers.

The only way to get to their house is on the highway, by way of a bridge to Montreal. Montreal means only bagels, Basha's Syrian food, Talon's art supplies, and the college where Pa works. But Ottawa is past Montreal on a desolate highway, and ends with a chain-link fence that surrounds a little lawn and a two-storey brick townhouse with squirrels that come to the door to eat what Grammy will feed them. I like to think it's her rolling childish laugh they come for. They are nervous little creatures but they trust Grammy. She has a way with the timid. I am one of them, a Townships squirrel tucked away on this endless dirt road.

She used to have pet raccoons and roosters when she was a bootlegger. I picture distilled hooch in glass jars in a bag held tightly on her lap as she sits on the bus. I saw a photo of her feeding a bottle to a baby racoon she was cradling. I heard the

story of the pair of roosters that defended my mother from neighbourhood bullies.

Pat and Vanna display a boat as a prize. I wonder how a boat got inside a TV room. Or how a fully furnished living room can be a prize. Again, I look past Grammy. Out into the woods that breathe and heave in the fall wind. When she is no longer here I will lay in this bed and stare out the window at the trees that sway like sea fans in invisible currents. We are so far from the sea but I like to imagine my brother and I in a raft in the river that snakes through our property and eventually to the ocean. We are inside a TV, I think, and winter is in my lungs. Me and Grammy have a show and it's interesting to trees and squirrels who watch us through the small window.

"Ooh, that Vanna is so a beautiful girl. Look!"

Warde is Grammy's Syrian name. It means Rose and her favourite song is *My Wild Irish Rose*, which has nothing to do with Syria or Warde, but her love of an Irish lumberman with whom she made my mother. He used to call her his wild Irish Rose. His name was Jim and he was an older man who worked in the Reuter Valley. My mother never met him. My grandmother cooked in the camp. They were not married. I try and picture her back then. She is taller and smiling, her hair curly and black. Her legs, she is always on them. The men fall in love with the taste of her food and her mischievous smile. In the kitchen trailer she has a tenuous authority. She has a temporary place in a world that seemed to not know what to do with her. I feel the same. I know the world keeps going. What will it do with me?

"Oh, Jesus was beautiful," says Grammy and tears are in her eyes as she rubs her legs. She has a crucifix that hangs from a chain around her neck but gets buried under folds of beautiful fat that are like uncooked dough.

"Your legs hurt, Grammy?"

"Oooh, they're so swollen, you fellas know. Put my tea in the michealwave, would you?"

I dart through the living room and into the crooked kitchen my father built with wood from the barn across the Yamaska

River that collapsed under the weight of snow. Gabi slaps his tail once against the tile behind the wood stove as if he has caught himself being happy. I put the tea in the microwave, push one for thirty and move away from the door.

I open the fridge and look at the chicken. I rip off a piece of breast meat and dip it into the jar of Hellmann's Real Mayonnaise. I eat standing up facing the food. I eat a cold *fatire* that Grammy made yesterday and that's why her legs hurt so bad today.

Lemon Sun squawks, "Watch it boys." I look at the yellow dash of colour in the cage and remember lemon meringue pie. Everything is something else in this place. Everything is moving, becoming.

I sing "Gabi" with this thought, and he slaps his tail on the ground. "Don't get up!"

The wood stove inhales continuously and it makes me think that everything flows out of the ground and up into the sky. But no, that isn't it really. I've seen how things go into the earth. The crab apples fall out of the tree and turn into earth under the shade of its thorny canopy.

Back in the bedroom Grammy is snoring. Once the sound was a nightmarish monster ripping me from sleep and making me run in terror through the Ottawa townhouse. Silly.

"Here's your tea, Grammy. "

I lay down next to her. I look at my legs and the ripped knees of my jeans. Her legs look like water balloons full of veins. They got this way from standing in kitchens for years. She really is food, Grammy. All she has ever done was cook for us and laugh and moan. All mixed together it rises like bread, bigger than the parts that went into it.

She wakes and starts speaking again as if we had been in an endless conversation.

"I went to school for one day and they sent me home." Her eyes beam proudly. "I was a wild thing. I would stay up in the fig trees all day. My father spanked me but he knew I was special and

he din' make me go back. I wanted to farm the figs and he wanted me to farm the figs."

Grammy falls back asleep eventually. Wheel of Fortune is over but it will play again tomorrow. It is her favourite show even though she can't read.

I take Gabi and go out and play with the farm machinery in the sand pile. Where is everybody sometimes? Adi, Gabi's mother, watches us from under the porch.

Grandpa Vic works for the RCMP and he used to walk with Adi's father, Abdul, to work. He says Abdul was the smartest dog he'd ever seen because Abdul would walk home after, stopping at all the red lights. Gabi is the smartest dog I've ever known and he comes with me everywhere except in the truck. To him the truck means the vet like a gunshot means thunder.

Ma comes home from the church in Dunham with paint and ink on her hands and clothes. Pa is still at work in St-Lambert. Jude is at French school in Dunham.

Me and Gabi and Adi go down to the river and I look for crayfish. Adi jumps on field mice and crunches their skulls with a delicate bite. Gabi leaves the river and joins her. I remember having picnics by the river with my mother before I had words to define the experience. On one of these rocks around here. Before school and all that which made up the feeling of never going backwards. It's never the same river.

We have a pork roast for dinner and Grammy doesn't sit with us. She says she isn't hungry but then while we sit at the table she canes her way into the kitchen and eats from the fridge in her fuzzy seafoam tracksuit.

"Ooh." She limps and watches us.

Payin' the Doctor



I WAS VACCINATED FOR SMALLPOX
IN 1931.
WE NEEDED THAT
IN ORDER TO GO TO SCHOOL.

I REMEMBER
WE WERE PICKIN' BLUEBERRIES
AROUND THAT TIME.
BECAUSE WE NEEDED THE BERRIES
TO PAY THE DOCTOR.

IN THOSE DAYS WE'D GET
25 CENTS FOR A 2-QUART CONTAINER,
A FULL MILK PAIL
WOULD PAY A DOLLAR.

IN A GOOD YEAR
BERRY BUSHES
COVERIN' ABOUT THE SURFACE
OF THE KITCHEN TABLE
WOULD GIVE 2 QUARTS OF BLUEBERRIES.

— MYRTLE ROWELL
FEB. 14/2003.

Denis Palmer

Grandmother's Kitchen

Donna Magwood

Annie May's big old kitchen was warmed by a two-oven wood stove that also heated a small water tank. On winter mornings Annie was up well before dawn to start the fire in that old stove. She baked wonderful breads in the ovens just as she had learned to do as a young girl growing up on her family farm in Leeds Township of Quebec's Megantic County.

I once asked my grandmother Annie for her raisin bread recipe and she gave me a list of ingredients without measurements. When I asked her how much flour, she replied simply "enough," as if that should have been obvious to me. I was a child raised in Montreal and its suburbs, and family trips to the Townships were my greatest pleasure. I loved the down-home people, the countryside and the farm animals. I loved our family gatherings in my grandmother's kitchen and quietly listening to the old folks telling stories that were as warm and comforting as the kitchen itself.

Annie was a daughter of two large families whose homes in Leeds Township were known then as Kings Corner and Crawfordville. Like many girls of her day, she taught in a small schoolhouse before marrying.

My grandfather, Robbie Magwood, who was known for his story-telling talents, had died before I was born. His family is remembered today by the Magwood Road near the village of Kinnear's Mills.

Robbie's paternal grandparents, William and Margaret, were Ulster Scots who married in Northern Ireland just before

coming to Quebec where their daughter Mary was born in 1829. Mary survived only seven months and was buried in Quebec City in October of that year. Perhaps for that reason, William and Margaret remained in Lower Canada while most of their relatives and friends continued on to Upper Canada or New England, where there was better farmland. In 1831, William owned 100 acres of forest land in Inverness Township, but soon after he had 125 acres on the third range of Leeds where he farmed and operated a wheelwright shop. There, he and Margaret built a homestead that housed three generations, who together celebrated numerous weddings, births, baptisms and funerals. In 1867, they saw Canada become a country—their country—and the country many of their descendants still call home.

William died in 1887, and Margaret in 1889. I'm eternally grateful to them for their hard work and determination to build a new home, and I'm happy to know they lived long enough to see some of the fruits of their labour. I like to imagine all the family gatherings they enjoyed and the fascinating stories that were told to the children in their grandmother's kitchen.

We, Too, Went to the Woods

Janet Chandler Allingham

"A clay vessel thought to be between 600-1000 years old has been found by a diver in Lake Memphremagog. The lake is located in Quebec's Eastern Townships. The artifact was found about 30 metres from the western shore of the lake, not far from Owl's Head Mountain. The Owasco people, of New York, ancestors of the Iroquois, hunted, fished, and traded in the region during that time period."

Parking my car, at the start of another work day, I was mesmerized by this news on the radio. Our family had once owned a cottage on the western shore of Lake Memphremagog! The report confirmed what I had been told since childhood: First Nations communities had long ago inhabited the region. In that moment, however, history came alive. I visualized indigenous paddlers, cutting through the waves in birchbark canoes. There weren't any cottages, of course, but I pictured the backdrop: the shapes of the rocks we knew on the shore, Round Island, and well-known mountains both near and far. One day, in haste, a paddler could have easily dropped an object from his canoe. Trying to comprehend the information, I thought about the date quoted in the radio newscast—the clay vessel was old!

Since hearing about the diver's find, I have frequently revisited my family's experiences in the woods. Sometimes, the memories have been nostalgic: the cottage was sold many years

ago. Recently, however, they have become the launching pad for reminiscence, research, and even self-discovery.

The influenza pandemic that followed World War I influenced our family's purchase, in 1960, of a cottage in the Leadville area of Pottontown Township, on Lake Memphremagog. Born shortly before the war, our parents grew up hearing that summers in Montreal were unhealthy for young children. Consequently, they believed that we should spend summer vacations in fresh, country air. Their decision to actually purchase a cottage may also have been influenced from another direction—our father's frequent reading of Henry David Thoreau's *Walden*. In this popular book, the author famously explains why he "went to the woods," while extolling the value of what we now think of as "simple living." Like Thoreau, my brother and I would be surprised and enriched by the experience of living close to the land, at arm's length from civilization.

Springs, summers and autumns at the cottage did more than benefit our health. Our new world was magical! "Hide-and-Go-Seek" had so much more potential in dense woods. Lake Memphremagog spread out beyond our sight, and had an ever-changing personality: one day, as calm as a mill pond; the next, as ferocious as the ocean. We adapted our activities accordingly. On calm days, we could swim behind the old boat while our mother rowed. Whenever the lake was rough, we were reminded to don the orange life jackets that hung in the boat house in order to "ride the waves." The path that skirted the shore magically reappeared each spring. "Will it be there again?" we wondered each fall, and it never disappointed. Originating in a glade of Boston ferns, this narrow byway begged exploration. If we weren't in or on the lake, the woods beckoned: there were birds and animals to watch through binoculars, and the fun of rushing indoors to search for them in the newly acquired Roger Tory Peterson Field Guides.

Our cottage was isolated: more than ten kilometres from Mansonville, down a steep access road off the Mountain House Road that we traversed on foot in wet weather. From this

landing, we followed an even steeper, heavily wooded path to the cottage. Close to where waves lap the rocky shore, it stands to this day. When we lived there, its size and simplicity would have pleased Thoreau: a place in which to eat and sleep, thereby encouraging us to spend most of our time outdoors. The view from the front porch made up for the cottage's small size because we were located at one of the widest expanses of the lake, more than three kilometres from the opposite shore.

Upon arrival from the city, we would dash down to the dock to identify the landmarks we could proudly name. Less than a mile away to the north was Round Island, surrounded, on sunny days, by sparkling waves. Across the lake, on its eastern shore, the mouth of Fitch Bay inspired canoe exploration. At dusk, Mt. Orford's red beacon appeared to the northeast. Southward toward Vermont, in distinct juxtaposition, were the peaks of Mounts Pisgah and Hor, separated by the Lake Willoughby Gap. When night fell, the lights of Newport shone. Once I became a strong enough swimmer, I was granted a significant privilege: permission to swim away from the dock, into deeper water, until I could see the top of Owl's Head Mountain, about ten kilometres to the north. This "checking in with my mountain" became both a morning ritual and the prelude to every swim.

My appreciation of a First Nations presence on Lake Memphremagog began, unknowingly, during one of our first weekends. We received an unsolicited visit from a stranger—Henry Wheeler. He had "slipped down to the lake" to introduce himself to the new family from the city. Lean of build, he wore a long-sleeved white shirt—the perfect foil for burnished skin—and a pair of well-worn pinstripe trousers. Our visitor was ready with conversation, and was most informative, with a dialect that communicated unfathomable images like "son of a gun"—so strange to young ears! Our dog was not a "beagle"; Henry said, emphatically, that we owned a "rabbit dog." While our parents conversed with the visitor, he expertly rolled up a tiny piece of paper and a pinch of tobacco into (surprise, surprise) a cigarette! Eventually, the newcomer presented his resume verbally:

handyman, caretaker of local cottages (including the offer to remove snow from the cottage roof in winter), and middle man with respect to the procurement and delivery of lumber and other supplies.

Henry soon lived up to the role of "handyman." When the steps washed out on the slope, he rebuilt them out of birch logs he had cut himself, finally securing them with wooden stakes. The project was completed with gravel he had hauled up from the shore. This, apparently, was how to do things in the woods: use what you have, and leave no trace. The following spring, our first, Henry warned us not to put the dock into the lake before May 24th. "If you do, it will float away down the lake to Magog," he said. This warning was well-received by my father, who quickly deleted the task from his list of weekend jobs.

An expert in the migration of local fish, Henry knew exactly when and where to put down his line. Awestruck, we watched as he cleaned a perch with a few quick strokes, after which he wiped the knife off on his pants. "Take this nice clean knife back to your mother," he said. This, we thought, must surely be the way to clean a fish knife, and we weren't pleased when our mother saw fit to wash it! In our eyes, Henry knew everything about the woods, the lake, and their inhabitants. Our parents must have trusted him, too, because they allowed us to accept his invitation to visit a "deer yard" deep in the woods. During this expedition, one of the most exciting adventures of the summer, we heard how Henry had evaded both local game wardens and customs officers. On one memorable occasion, he had even "shod a cow backwards" in order to distract the authorities. Later, standing on the dock in a reminiscent mood one sunny day, he pointed south and announced grandly: "There's a lot of good liquor down in those waters!"

Such accounts of brushes with the law and derring-do were inspirational to two city children! Considering his activities heroic, we decided that we, too, must wear the same red and black plaid jackets Henry wore. We balked at our parents' offer to buy them in the city. "No thanks," we insisted, "they have to come

from Giroux's Hardware, in Mansonville." We knew that was where Henry had bought his.

During summer vacations, while our father worked weekdays in the city, Henry was available to do any odd jobs that came along. One of them, in particular, taught us something important about his personal history. Having agreed to repair a broken window, he first removed the shards of glass, and then "measured" the opening—not with a measuring tape, as we expected, but with a piece of string that he knotted in two places. Was this a local custom? Maybe no one around the lake used measuring tapes? Gradually, it dawned on our parents that Henry could neither read nor write. The piece of string, always available, had served him well as the perfect measuring device. A second clue had been the "X" with which he endorsed cheques.

Over time, we came to appreciate that while Henry lacked traditional literacy skills, he was not illiterate. His literacies were those vital to his survival: the steep terrains, the lake in all its moods, the woods and its inhabitants. All of these he could read, but we could not. We wondered how a child could possibly grow up without the abilities to read and write. A walk along the Mountain House Road would hold the answer. Leadville's backcountry schoolhouse had stood about four kilometres from where Henry had grown up. Bears had been seen on that road. A walk to school would have been dangerous for anyone. Even in good weather, it was a very long journey.

We depended on Henry to tell us what winter was like around the lake. Somewhat dramatically, he responded that July was the only month in which he had never seen snow! Fishing in winter was not about recreation—it was essential to his family's survival. "Big John," his father, famously traversed the ice, laden with buckets of fish to sell in Newport, some ten kilometres south. Henry also warned that winters could be dangerous on and around the frozen lake. One dark night, returning by horse-drawn sleigh from a dance on the eastern shore, he had lost his bearings. Fortunately, the horse guided them both safely home. Enthralled by such stories, we recognized the tap of his boot

on the back porch as the hoped-for cue that we were about to receive a visit. He approached silently, even when accompanied by others, walking softly in the woods—the better way to see and hear more. We learned to adopt this habit.

I've come to realize that we depended on Henry's skills, knowledge, and lived experience to survive comfortably and safely in his world—a world that challenged us. His visits, in fact, became one of the highlights of our weekends, every interaction filled with colour and context. His death, the result of an accident with an old hunting rifle, would leave us bereft. The call from the Townships came through one dark, March evening. The house went silent with our profound and new-felt grief. We all knew that cottage life would never be the same.

In Potton, Henry's death did not escape comment. Some questioned the location of his burial in the Mansonville Protestant Cemetery. They asserted: "He should have been buried in the Leadville Cemetery, closer to the lake...He was part of that lake." We came to appreciate the wisdom of those words. Our times at the lake now felt deficient; his death had left a void that would never be filled.

Our friend had taught us well, however, and as the ensuing seasons came and went, we remembered his lessons. Many of them were the practical ones—when and how to perform the tasks required to maintain the property. Perhaps even more importantly, he modelled a "way of being" in the woods, one that we adopted. Somehow, inexplicably, it made Henry seem part of our lives again.

To this day, resident no longer, I still feel deeply connected to Potton: its land, bodies of water, and natural inhabitants. I need to keep in touch with the comings and going of its seasons, and revisit the area whenever the opportunity arises. Each morning, my ritual of savouring the taste of maple syrup from Vale Perkins is an act of intentional reconnection.

This act of writing began as a reminiscence of bucolic childhood summers. One memory, however, kept calling out for

verification. A neighbour had once remarked, "Henry had Indian blood, you know."

Our parents had told us that "Memphremagog" was the Indian word for "beautiful waters" and that "Owl's Head" was named after an Indian chief. There had also been material evidence for an indigenous presence around the lake when we gazed upon a fish hook from "our" Round Island in the Brome County Museum, in Knowlton. This was proof positive of a First Nations presence on the lake. What might have developed into an appreciation of this history conflicted, however, with other representations. For some reason these accounts, documents, and celebrations began in the nineteenth century and involved people with distinctly English names. In these and other ways, I now realize, the local history of First Nations people was eclipsed by that of the colonists. If Henry had "Indian blood," I certainly didn't connect that fact with the local community.

I continued to ponder the question many times over the intervening decades. At first, it was merely a theoretical inquiry: "Was he or wasn't he?" While writing this account, I began to reframe the question: "Might Henry have been a descendant of the First Nations people who lived on and around the lake?" With First Nations history now in the forefront of Canadian culture, it was a kairotic time to search for the answer.

To my surprise, the answer would come quickly. Through Louise Abbott, who has written extensively about the lake and its history, I was given the name of an Abenaki historian in Vermont. Bea Aldrich Nelson, of Holland, answered my question directly and definitively. "Yes," she said, "the Wheeler family is Abenaki." Anticipating a long investigation, I was stunned. How could we have failed to come to that conclusion ourselves? There had been so many clues.

Confirmation of Henry's lineage first evoked satisfaction: my question had been answered. In a split second, however, satisfaction was obliterated by the realization that if the Wheelers were indigenous to Potton, then were we cottagers not actually settlers on traditional Abenaki land? Our dependence on Henry

in the twentieth century, reminiscent of Samuel de Champlain's well-documented dependence on indigenous people in the early seventeenth century, was an astounding parallel.

It would be easy, even melodramatic, to suggest that Henry kept his indigenous history to himself. Bea Nelson, however, says there is a good chance that he was unaware of it. She explains that First Nations people often hid their lineage through intermarriage with settlers. It was considered a safer alternative.

As Canadians discover, rediscover, and celebrate First Nations history, and as we begin to explore the implications of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's report, I feel obliged to honour Henry and other Abenaki people who lived on and around the lake in Potton. This story is incomplete unless I encourage an appreciation of Abenaki names: "Owl's Head"—known as "Walowadjo," the saw whet owl; and "Memphremagog"—known as "Memlabagwok," "a long and large sheet of water."

Like Thoreau, our family went to the woods. We sought solitude and recreation, but discovered that we were, after all, dependent on another. Henry, who retained and epitomized the lived experience and wisdom of the region's earliest inhabitants, shared that knowledge with us through example, teaching, and stories. We were the beneficiaries of this friendship, one from which I continue to learn, the result of occupying, at least for a time, the beautiful land of the Abenaki, close to "my" Walowadjo, on the shore of "my" Memlabagwok.

The author wishes to thank the following for their collaboration during the writing of this essay: Louise Abbott; Bea Aldrich Nelson; and Arlene Royea Ayotte, of the Brome County Historical Society.

WORK





Sugaring off

Townspeople gather for a "sugaring-off" at a cabane-à-sucre (sugar shack) in Cookshire, Quebec, circa 1900.

Winston Fraser

Charlie the Cookshire Chemist

Winston Fraser

Charles Clark Fraser's "day job" for more than 50 years was that of head chemist at Frasier, Thornton & Co. Ltd., a patent medicine factory in Cookshire, Quebec, that his brother Jared (Jed) was instrumental in establishing and of which his other brother James (Jim) was General Manager.

This enterprise was one of several where Charlie and his two brothers worked together.

Gloria (Frasier) Bellam, Jim's daughter and Charlie's niece, describes the company's founding and early history:

"In the year 1903, at Digby, Nova Scotia, the firm of Frasier, Thornton & Co. was formed with the object in view of manufacturing and selling proprietary medicines, stove polishes, and oils. Shortly after the Company was formed they purchased the Letteney Manufacturing Company, Limited, of Digby, N.S., manufacturers of stove polishes and oils, also the business known as J.C. Frasier & Co., importers and manufacturers of high grade oils



*Brothers Jared (Jed), Charlie, and James (Jim)
Courtesy Gloria [Frasier] Bellam*

and greases. Within a year of being formed, the company was moved to Cookshire, Quebec, as it was more centrally located for shipping to other parts of the country, and also the town was situated on the main line of the Canadian Pacific Railway and junction of the Maine Central Railway.

The year 1904 was a disastrous one for the new company, as they suffered a severe setback by having their factory, machinery and practically all their stock destroyed by fire. A new building was secured, and manufacturing soon resumed. The firm's goods were introduced and advertised in Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick, and Quebec. The result of the increased and continually increasing business in this territory was that the output of the factory was inadequate to fill the orders, even when taking into consideration that the factory was running overtime about three days a week. During the winter of 1907 and spring of 1908, a new building was constructed having three storeys with a floor space of 15,000 square feet. At the back was a box factory 28' by 60' where cases used in shipping goods were made. In 1911, approximately 150,000 feet of boards were converted into shipping cases. The new building was one of the first with



*First Frasier, Thornton & Co. building in Cookshire, Que., circa 1903
Courtesy of Gloria [Frasier] Bellam*



Second Frasier, Thornton & Co. building in Cookshire, Que., circa 1910

Courtesy of Gloria [Frasier] Bellam

inter-office telephones – there were about 12 installed within the facility.”

The company’s products were advertised in various ways. In addition to the giant ads painted on the exterior walls of the factory, there were promotional items such as blotters and rulers. Gloria Bellam continues her story of the company’s history:

“Between the years 1904 and 1912, the following companies were bought, one at a time, and their preparations added to the growing list of Frasier, Thornton & Co. products:

Fred L. Shaffner & Co., manufacturers of Dr. J.

WOODBURY’S HORSE LINIMENT AND DR. J. WOODBURY’S
CONDITION POWDERS

The Dr. Bell Medicine Co., Truro, N.S., manufacturers
of DR. BELL’S REMEDIES

The Acme Mfg. Co., Lunenburg, N.S., manufacturers
of ACME STOCK FOOD REMEDIES

Pendelton’s Panacea Co., St. John, N.B., manufacturers
of PENDELTON’S PANACEA AND PENDELTON’S REMEDIES

In addition, the company was sole owner and manufacturer
of:

DR. STANLEY'S FAMOUS PREPARATIONS
 OLIVEINE EMULSION
 LAXA PURPLE QUININE TABLETS
 MUSKALENE
 PELLETIER'S SYRUP OF TAR AND CODENE
 FRASIER'S OILS AND GREASES
 THORNTON'S ENGLISH VETERINARY REMEDIES"



Selection of Frasier, Thornton & Co. patent medicines. Courtesy of Bertina Benitez



Cod liver oil product card

Also included in the company's product line were less exotic preparations such as cod liver oil.

As head chemist, Charlie was intimately involved in the development of the formulae for these various medicines and other preparations. The fact that a common ingredient of many of the medicines was alcohol caused the company some unforeseen problems. Gloria Bellam provides the details:

"The western branch [of Frasier Thornton & Co.] in Saskatoon [Saskatchewan] opened in 1910 and flourished with sales increasing rapidly over the next few years. However, when James [Charlie's older brother] heard why some of the preparations, which contained alcohol as a preservative, were being bought in such large quantities he was very concerned. People were extracting the alcohol from the cough syrups etc. for drinking. Because James' [and Charlie's] mother had been an ardent W.C.T.U. worker and had signed a pledge never to take alcoholic beverages, he closed the western branch of the

company, and from then on, sales were chiefly in Quebec and the Maritimes where alcoholic beverages were more easily obtained.”

Several years later, the company faced another alcohol-related challenge. Around 1942, during World War II, the federal government gave the breweries an increased allotment of alcohol, but an increase was refused to Frasier, Thornton & Co. Ltd. However, after company representatives went to Ottawa to protest, they returned with an increased allotment.

Charlie not only developed the recipes for the company’s patent medicines but also coined the names for several of them, including Oliveine Emulsion and Muskalene. These two product names survived for the life of the company, but not all of them did. The federal government forced the company to change the name of “Pendelton’s Panacea” to “Pendelton’s Pancea.” To protest the change, the company modified the label to print by retaining the middle “a” but putting an oblique bar through it

Pendelton's Pan~~a~~cea

Modified label for Panacea

Courtesy of Gloria [Frasier] Bellam

The government also tried to make the company change “Dr. Stanley’s White Liniment” to “Dr. Stanley’s Eggless Liniment.” But the company refused and continued with the original name for that very popular product.

Although Frasier, Thornton and Co. was best known for its patent medicines to treat human conditions, it also offered various veterinary products such as horse liniment and condition powders. In addition, the company sold non-medicinal products such as harness oil.

As chief chemist, Charlie was keeper of the secret recipes for the company’s various preparations. His extensive raw materials list



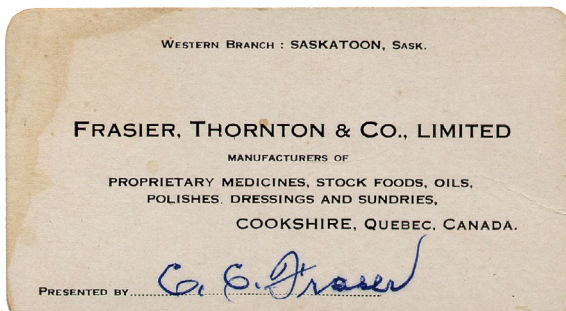
Harness oil ad

contains more than 100 items including the following less than appetizing ingredients:

white pine bark	turpentine	isopropyl
squill root	charcoal	ethyl nitrite
chloroform	kerosene	varsol

Although their products were marketed only in Canada, a number of Frasier, Thornton & Co.'s suppliers were from the USA. These included Whitney & Kemmerer (coal supplier) of Buffalo, N.Y.; the Buckeye Stamping Co. of Columbus, Ohio; the Chemical Supply Co. of Cleveland, Ohio; Synfleur Scientific Laboratories of Monticello, N.Y.; and United Naval Stores Co. of New York, N.Y.

For more than 50 years, Frasier Thornton & Company was a respected institution and its advertisement-covered building a unique landmark seen by thousands, thanks to its prominent location beside the main line of the Canadian Pacific Railway from Montreal to Halifax, N.S. During that half-century, Charles Clark Fraser was a key contributor to the company's success.



Charlie's business card

I Usta Cut Pulpwood



MARCH 23, 2000.

Denis 2014.

I USTACUT PULPWOOD
BACK WHEN I WAS A YOUNG FELLA.
WE HAD TO PEEL THE WOOD THEN.
IN THE SUMMER
THE BARK WOULD SLIP OFF EASY.
IF YA WAITED 'TIL FALL
THE SHIP GOT STICKY'
AH 'IT WAS HARD GOIN'.
WE USED A CROSSCUT SAW
THAT HAD A NARROW BLADE.
IF YER BLADE WAS TOO WIDE
IT WOULD BIND.
WE'D MAKE MAYBE A DOLLAR,
DOLLAR AH 'A HALF A DAY.
DON'T SEEM LIKE MUCH NOW,
BUT EVERYONE ELSE WAS MAKIN' THE SAME.

— GEORGE ROWELL, EAST LIFTON.

Denis Palmer

Seasonal Manual Work Using Horses in the Forties in Cherry River

Harvey Catchpaw

I was born in 1933 on a farm with no electricity and no running water. Therefore, there were many chores for my brothers, sisters, and me. Every morning we had to carry water to refill the wood stove reservoir and the teakettle, which mother needed for daily washing and cooking.

SUMMER

The day started with our collie dog, Sport, going to the pasture to round up the forty dairy cows and bring them to the barn. If a cow was missing, Sport would find it. A few cows had a bell tied to their necks making them easier to locate. Once the cows arrived in the barn and took their own stall, we had to tie up each one of them using a chain around its neck.

Each cow was milked by hand into a pail, and the milk was then poured through a filter streamer into an eight-gallon can. After milking was finished, we untied the cows and they left the barn to return to the pasture until the next milking at the end of the day.

We passed the milk through the separator. This was turned by hand to separate the cream from the skim milk, which was used to feed the young calves and pigs.

The cream was poured into eight-gallon cans which were transported by a two-wheel buggy to a cooling area: a cemented or wooden box placed in a stream of cool running water. Thereafter, the cans were transported once again to be put on a stand beside the road for shipping.

The procedure of separating the cream and milk lasted for several years, until eventually the whole milk was sent directly to the Carnation Factory for processing instead. After that we used the separator only when mother needed whipped cream to serve on fresh wild strawberries, raspberries, and blueberries, or for making ice cream.

Following each summer morning's milking, we still had to feed the horses, pigs, and laying hens before returning to the house to washup and have our breakfast. Our father would then plan our workday for chores to be done outside or inside, depending on the weather.

The hay harvest

Haying began on a nice sunny day in late June, when Dad decided to harvest the hay. First, the cutting bar knives section of the horse-drawn mowing machine had to be sharpened.

One of us had to turn the grindstone manually to sharpen each section. Then we replaced the sections in the cutting bar. We hitched the horses to the mowing machine to cut the hay.

My father would sit on the spring metal seat to drive the horses and mow a large sector of hay. Spring seats were very commonly used on all horse-drawn equipment. The seats were V-shaped, made of metal, and attached to a metal post with a spring, for our partial comfort.

We had to use the hand scythe to mow the corners and wet areas, where the horses with the mowing machine could not pass.

The next day, one of us would hitch the horse to the rake and sit on the spring seat to drive the horse to rake the hay in windrows.

Meanwhile, my brothers with their hay pitchforks would make tumbles of hay. For this, they had to hitch the horses to the

wagon with a large hayrack (8' x 14' x 8'). Three or four of them would go in the field. Two would stay on the hayrack, one to drive the horses and one to place the hay, while the two others would walk along each side of the wagon pitching up the tumbles of hay onto the hayrack. When the hayrack was full, they would go to the barn to unload the hay in the hay loft.

The two on the load would pitch off the hay into the mows while the two others would place the hay around in the mows. Once the wagon was empty and back in the field, the same procedure was repeated until all the hay was picked up. And this for many acres!

Afterwards, we had to return to rake the scattered hay left in the field. Later, we would go back with the horses and the wagon to pick the hay up and bring it to the barn.

After haying, it was time to turn the soil for the following year. My father would do this with the hand-walking farrow plow, hauled by the horses. The plow would turn the soil for the following spring.

Then we had to pick up the stones, throwing them in the wagon box pulled by the horses. The small stones were put in the wagon box and hauled to a stone pile. The larger stones were put on a stone-boat platform made of wood and hauled by the horses.



My father using a hand-walking farrow plow

FALL

In early fall, it was time to harvest the potatoes (40 bushels) by using a horse-drawn tool to loosen the soil. Then, manually with a potato digger, we were able to move the potatoes to the side to dry. We separated them into three categories with the smallest kept aside. My mother used these to cook a special mix to feed the pigs.

Another task had to be done before the cold weather: the harvest of the food for the animals, such as corn and turnip. These were passed through a manual machine and then mixed with grain before being used as feed for the cows in the barn.

Firewood: furnace & cook stove

Our parents owned a woodlot a few miles from the farm. In spring, the wood was cut, chopped, and brought to the farm to be piled and dried. In fall, we'd haul it to the shed attached to the kitchen. The small wood was used for the cook stove and the block wood for the furnace in the basement. This was the only way to keep our home warm and to cook. This was a yearly procedure, and we burned about 50 cords a year.

I recall when we finished our education in the local country school, my brother and I wanted to go to work. There were not many job openings, so our parents decided that we would go in the woods to cut wood to sell, such as logs and sleigh-length logs for stove wood burning. Our parents had a small log cabin on the woodlot, so we decided that we would stay there during the week and come home on the weekend. We would walk to the cabin on Sunday afternoons, with our packed food for the week.

Our tools were wedges, the axe and buck saw, which were one-man tools; and the cross-cut saw, which was a two-man tool. These tools had to be well-maintained and very sharp to cut hardwood trees, like maple, birch, beech, ash, and basswood.

After we determined which way the tree should fall, one of us would chop a V-notch in the trunk. Using the cross-cut saw, we would then begin cutting a notch on the backside of the tree.

The cross-cut saw operated in a back-and-forth motion, from left and right. While one person pulled, the other pushed. As we continued sawing, chips of wood would be pushed out on each side. Using this method, it would take between twenty and thirty minutes to cut down a tree, depending on its size.

When we could see the notch on the far side of the trunk, we would put a V-wedge in for our safety, then continue sawing back and forth until we came close to the notch.

Using the axe, we drove the wedge further into the trunk, forcing the tree to fall. Once it was on the ground, we would need to decide if it was a sellable log. This depended on its length and quality. We'd measure the logs needed, and taking our cross-cut saw, we would cut the felled tree at the right lengths. The remaining parts were cut into sleigh-length pieces, varying from 8' to 12' long. Some were cut with the cross-cut saw and others with the bucksaw. We chopped up the small limbs using the axe.

We prepared the skid-way (a platform 3' to 4' high) in the front of the road. This made it easier to load the logs onto double sleds come winter. Next, we used the horse to skid the wood to the skid-way, manually piling the smaller logs and using the can-dog to roll the larger logs.

WINTER

Hauling out the wood

When the cold weather set in, and the snow arrived in December, our father would come to prepare the sled road through the woods. The road connected the places where the wood was previously piled on the skid-way. Depending on the temperature and the depth of the snow, father would have to walk the horses without the sled to pack the snow. The following day, we would go back through the road with the horses and the double sleds. Then, we would load the wood onto the sleds and haul it to the main road, about two miles out. We would be responsible for two to three trips per day through the winter months.

On days when there was a large accumulation of snow, our father would not come to the woods because he had to hitch the horses to the large wood roller to pack down the snow, passing over the main road, going by the school house and down to the village of Cherry River.

SPRING

Cutting & selling the wood

When spring came, the sled-length wood (16" long) and the stove wood were cut using a table-circular saw powered by a gasoline motor. The remaining logs were left beside the road to be sold to the sawmills, between 12,000 to 15,000 feet of lumber in all. This wood had to be split with an axe and piled in cords (4' high by 8' long). In total, we had cut and piled between 200 to 300 cords of wood.

Working in the sugar bush

At the same time, we had to work in the sugar bush. The first thing we were responsible for was walking the horses through the snow to prepare the road. Then, we would hitch the sled to the horses and go back to the sugar bush with about 300 spouts and sap buckets. We walked to each tree with a hand bit stock



Our family sugarhouse in the 1940s, which still exists today.

and drilled two-inch deep holes. Depending on the size of the tree, we would drill between two and four holes and install a spout and bucket in each hole. Smaller trees would require only two buckets.

Weather permitting, these buckets would be full of sap the following day. We would return with the horses and the sled with the 200-gallon tub. We would walk to each tree gathering the sap, pouring it in a pail, then carry it back to the sled and pour it into the tub.

When the tub was full of sap, we would sleigh back to the sugarhouse to pour the sap into the 400-gallon tub, which was connected with pipes to the sugar rig pans; this one having three big syrup pans for boiling the sap into syrup. We would have maple syrup to last us through the following year, and sometimes enough to sell.

Preparing the soil

Our father always finished turning the soil himself with the horses and the hand-walking farrow plow. When this task was completed, it was our responsibility to take the horses and hitch them to the four-wheel wagon. We used the dung-forks to load the manure manually in the box. The horses hauled the wagon and we spread the manure with the dumb-fork by hand all over the turned soil... and this for at least ten acres, if not more.

After we finished spreading the manure, we removed the horses from the wagon and hitched them on the disk-harrow to mix the manure into the soil. Sitting on the spring seat of the wagon, and holding the reins to control the horses, we had to pass over the bumpy terrain many times to pulverize and smooth over the soil to prepare it for seeding.

Around the end of May, we had to hitch the horses to another cultivating tool to make the row straight and deep enough to plant the seed potatoes. Each seed potato had to be cut by hand in different shapes as we were taught by our father: "Always try to leave three eyes on each cut potato." Carrying these cut potatoes

in a pail, we would walk between the rows, dropping one seed potato every two feet. The two horses were hitched to another cultivated tool called a hiller. The horses walked on each side of the row where the potatoes were planted. The V-shaped hiller would pull dirt two feet wide and one foot high over the potato row.

After approximately two weeks, when the potato tops sprouted out of the soil, we would hitch one horse to a hand-walking cultivator with adjustable blades to turn the dirt in the row to loosen the soil. After all the potato rows were cultivated, we had to hitch two horses to the V-shaped hiller to put more loose dirt over the potatoes. The more dirt kept over the hill of the row, the better crop of potatoes will be produced. The same procedure was followed for corn, beans, and other crops.

My mother kept a very large vegetable garden so that we could sow and harvest as many vegetables as possible for eating in summer, and preserving for winter.



We were a family of eleven children living on a farm in the 1940s. Our parents taught us at a young age to take responsibility for the many routine daily chores that had to be carried out in order for our family to survive. In the evening under the light of kerosene lamps, our parents found time to help us with our homework and play games like cards, checkers, cribbage and also to listen on the battery-operated radio to a few old programs like *The Lone Ranger*, or music from West Virginia in the United States.

Our parents were strict and Mother had a disciplinary voice that we all respected. At the end of a long day of work, it was pleasurable to sit together as a family and eat our home-cooked meal.

Many Hands



MANY HANDS TURN OUT TO HELP
EVERY YEAR,

FIRST WEEK OF SEPTEMBER, GENERALLY WEDNESDAY.
FROM FAR AND NEAR, MANY GATHER FOR A HARVEST SUPPER
PRESENTED BY MEMBERS OF THE SAWERVILLE UNITED
AND OTHERS.

TURKEY, MASHED POTATOES, CARROTS, PICKLES &
AND EVERY KIND OF PIE YOU CAN IMAGINE.
WE DON'T GO HOME HUNGRY.



OR THURSDAY,
ER
CHURCH

COLE SLAW. HOT BUNS, COFFEE, TEA, OR JUICE ...

Denis 2016.

The Stanstead County Women's Institute Celebrates a Century

Victoria Vanier

On a warm and sunny day in May, 2015, dozens of cars converged from all directions on the small Eastern Townships hamlet of Hatley. The drivers and passengers were there to celebrate a remarkable milestone: the 100th anniversary of the Stanstead County Women's Institute (SCWI).

Women's Institute members from Austin, Brome, Bury, Kinnear's Mills, Lennoxville and Richmond, and as far away as Quebec City, came to congratulate their Stanstead County "sisters," filling every seat in the historic St. James Hall, now the town's Community Centre.

As staff reporter at the *Stanstead Journal*, I had been invited to attend the historic event and I'm glad that I did. When I arrived, a festive atmosphere prevailed, as women called out to friends arriving from all corners of the Townships.

Several government officials also came for the celebration, including Orford riding Deputy Pierre Reid, the only man to be seen among the slightly boisterous crowd of women. When Hatley mayor Denis Ferland arrived and was told to sit anywhere, he got a roar of laughter from the room full of ladies when he said: "I think I'll sit with Mr. Reid!"

The president-elect of the Federated Women's Institutes of Canada, Lennoxville's Linda Hoy, also attended along with Sheila

Needham, Canada Area President of the ACWW (Association of Country Women of the World), and Norma Sherrer, president of the Quebec Women's Institute (QWI). What's especially noteworthy about the two national presidents and the provincial president is that all three hail from the Eastern Townships.

The SCWI, which now includes the Ayer's Cliff, Hatley Centre and Hatley/Stanstead branches, was founded in 1915, eighteen years after Canada's first Women's Institute was started in Ontario. Some of its founders include Mrs. W. H. Holmes of Way's Mills, Mrs. Ralph Libby of Ayer's Cliff, and Miss R. W. Brown of Smith's Falls, facts I discovered while looking through the carefully kept historical documents that were on display at the event. The mission of all Women's Institutes is timeless: "To inform women so that they may make decisions which will improve the quality of life for themselves, their families, their communities, and the world."

Scotty Miller, an SCWI member for over sixty years, sat at a small table of honour along with Lois Cooper, who also joined in the 1950s. Dressed in their "Sunday best," the two women leisurely poured tea into vintage bone china teacups for their fellow members. When I spoke with them about the organization, it was clear that it was and always will be an important and enriching part of their lives.

"A long time ago, our Institute used to organize sewing and cooking classes, and medical clinics. We were the first suppliers of hot lunches to school children in this area; we sponsored the school fair and gave seeds to students, inspected their gardens, then gave them prizes. The Women's Institute was a great community builder," said Mrs. Miller, with more than a hint of pride.

"Many of the activities that we started were eventually taken over by the schools and the towns," added Mrs. Cooper, who learnt how to sew clothes for her entire family with the Institute's special classes (an important skill sixty years ago in rural communities, when clothing stores were rare). "It was nice to get away from the work at home and the business, the family

responsibilities, and come to the Women's Institute meetings; it was a good connection. And now I can say that I probably know most of the people here today."

But as Mrs. Miller, in her nineties, also observed: "Times change." Although membership in the Stanstead County Women's Institute was around one hundred at the club's peak decades ago, it now sits at eighteen. Still, the members continue to be very active in the community.

"We give out scholarships to young women every year, and we take care of a fair exhibit and the Tea Room at the Ayer's Cliff Fair," said member Phyllis Dustin, dressed in period costume for the occasion. "We also give money to local elementary schools for their libraries and breakfast programs, and make a float each year for Hatley's Canada Day Parade."

Phyllis' husband, Melvin Dustin, had by now come out from the kitchen and was delivering snacks and beverages to less mobile senior guests and doing anything else required for the event. He is a former recipient of the Women's Institute's "Erland Lee Award," given each year to a man who is a big help to a branch of the Women's Institute.

"My grandmother and my mother both belonged to the Women's Institute. So when my kids were grown, I joined," said Dyanne Saanum, the president of the SCWI. "When I was five years old my Mom brought me to my first meeting and asked if I wanted to help. I said 'yes' and she gave me an apron with ducks on it. I still have that apron, and I still like to help people."

The hosts of the celebration entertained the nearly one hundred guests rather creatively, beginning with an original poem read by two members dressed as men who were impersonating "WI husbands." Everyone laughed knowingly as the "husbands" bemoaned the desserts they saw come out of the oven but never got to taste, or the loss of their tractors during hay season when a float was needed for the parade.

The poem was followed by a skit of a census taker gathering information during a Women's Institute meeting, with hysterical results. "How many children do you have?" he asked. "We have

eleven.” “Can you afford them?” he asked again. “We don’t buy them!” was the enthusiastic comeback.

The census taker was soon chased from the meeting!

At the end of the event, president Saanum presented a young maple tree to Mayor Ferland, to be planted on the Hatley Commons. And if you doubt the positive impact of the smaller gestures of the Women’s Institutes—such as presenting a community with a tree—just take a good look at the magnificent maples that line the Hatley Commons today, planted on June 8th, 1939, by members of the Stanstead County Women’s Institute!



Generations



Clara Wing McAuley & Children

My Grandmother Clara Wing McAuley holding my Aunt Frances.
In front is my Uncle Edwin, my father Harold, and my Uncle Albert. The photo was taken in 1922 in Austin, Quebec.

Danny McAuley

Chokecherry Pie

Danny McAuley

“Hey, Albert!” bellows Aunt Betty. “Remember Ma’s chokecherry pie?” “Mother never made chokecherry pie,” replies Uncle Albert. “Chokecherries’ll make you sick.” “Oh, she did so,” snorts Betty with a twinkle in her eye. “I remember pick’n ‘em. How come I picked ‘em if it wasn’t for pie?”

The argument would draw in the other siblings, the sides already formed years ago. It wasn’t Christmas or a family picnic without the fight over Ma’s chokecherry pie. The McAuleys always liked teasing and joking with each other. And the louder the better. It was like they were calling in the cows. But I guess when you come from a family of eight children, you have to make yourselves heard.

It must have been hard for them growing up in the 1920s on a small farm near Austin, Quebec. The family didn’t have much and their father, Jasper, had lost an arm in a sawmill accident in 1913, which meant that everyone had to pitch in that much more. Sawmills and logging had been a McAuley family occupation since their arrival in Canada, thanks to the British American Land Company that realized there was money to be made from lumber. Large tracts of land needed to be cleared and there were paying jobs to do it.

In a different kind of “clearing,” thousands of immigrants came from the Scottish Highlands to Lower Canada. The Macaulays—as our name was spelled then—were cleared from Uig on the Isle of Lewis in 1850. The clearances were not peaceful or happy times. Families did not want to leave the land

they had lived on and worked for generations. But it was not a choice. Posses would come to the villages and force all the people out, burn the roofs of the crofts [cottages], and anyone giving them trouble would be beaten and bound. Villagers often fled with nothing but the shirts on their backs. They were then loaded onto boats and sealed in the hold until the end of the voyage to the New World. There was little food or water. There was illness, and many died.

When at last they arrived ashore, they were initially placed in quarantine where conditions were miserable. This brutal treatment was deemed necessary as famine and illness had struck the Highlands hard, and it was thought that a better life was possible in the colonies. But it was also much more profitable for landowners in Scotland to have sheep on their land than poor farmers, so whole villages of Scots were dumped in Lower Canada.

The Macaulays were sent to Lingwick in the Eastern Townships near Lac Megantic. The area was crawling with Highland Scots, a fact that is reflected in the names of towns like Stornoway, Scotstown, Gould, and East Angus. These Scots spoke Gaelic and continued to do so for many years. Aunt Betty could remember her aunts working away together in the kitchen, speaking “the Gaelic.”

The terrain in this area was rough, the underbrush thick, and the winters vicious, but the land was eventually cleared and roads were built. Route 108 from Gould to Bury was one of many laid by the Scots of Lewis.

Today, there is a Rue McAuley in Coaticook, the McAuley Centre on the Cookshire Fairgrounds, and many McAuley graves scattered throughout the Townships. Ma’s chokecherry pie may remain a matter of contention, but it is certain that the McAuleys found their place as a Townships family.

The Dukakis': The Story of a Fictional Lennoxville Family

Thomas Bilodeau

Once upon a time, there was a fellow named John Dukakis. Mister Dukakis was of Greek descent, and had emigrated from his homeland to Canada in the 1870s. On a snowy, wintry day early in 1872, he arrived in the small town of Lennoxville in the Eastern Townships region of Quebec. The weather was quite a shock for him. He had never seen snow in all his life.

Still, he was not feeling uneasy about this aspect of his new country. Snow meant a new start in a new country for John.

A few weeks earlier, he'd bought a ticket onboard a vessel named *The Great Empress* in London bound for Halifax, Canada. After a two-week journey, he'd arrived in port on New Year's Day.

Two days later, he got off a train in Lennoxville, a tiny English-speaking town in a province divided along linguistic lines. The main attraction of the town was Bishop's University, founded in 1843. John knew little about the place where he'd decided to settle.

The first thing he noticed was that some of his neighbours were French-speaking. He knew that he had to make an effort to learn French in order to communicate with them.

About three years later, a couple days before his forty-first birthday, he met a young seventeen-year-old teacher named

Marie-Alice Gagnon. She lived and taught in the small village of Compton, a few kilometers south of Lennoxville. The eldest of a family of 18 children, she'd grown up on a dairy farm in Compton, and had the rugged, healthy beauty of a country girl.

John became fast infatuated with the red-haired teacher with the shy laugh, who spoke a language he could barely understand. At first, his infatuation was not reciprocated. Marie-Alice was hesitant because John was so much older, but finally after a year of being courted, she agreed to accept his proposal. What eventually won her over, she later told her husband, was his European charm. In October 1876, the couple were married at the Catholic Church in Compton.

A few weeks after Marie-Alice's 19th birthday, she learned that she was pregnant with her first child. By then the couple had moved into a house on Academy Street in Lennoxville, purchased by Marie-Alice's parents as a wedding present. On June 1, 1877, Marie-Alice gave birth to their first child: Bonnie Dukakis. Over the following years, John and Marie-Alice had five other children and were very happy, though busy, parents.

Around this time, John decided to apply to Bishop's University. He got accepted in the School of Education, with the goal of becoming a high school Chemistry and Physics teacher. He really wanted to integrate himself into his new society. Aside from his studies at Bishop's, he was also taking French lessons in order to more easily communicate with his new wife and his in-laws, who could hardly speak English at all.

During the first two years of their marriage, John and Marie-Alice had many difficulties communicating. However, by the late spring of 1878, Marie-Alice was fluent enough in English to be able to speak comfortably with her husband. For his part, John was progressing with his French education, though slowly.

In September 1880, John got hired as the Chemistry and Physics teacher at Bishop's College School, a private school that still exists today. He'd graduated the year before from Bishop's University, with a dual major in Sciences and Education. He

taught for fifteen years and was loved by students and teachers alike, before finally retiring at the age of 61.

Four years before his retirement, he decided to run for municipal council in Lennoxville. This had always been in the back of John's mind. Before he'd moved to Canada, when he was young and living all over Europe, he'd run for council once in the tiny town of Regensburg, Germany. Now, half a world away, he ran for municipal office once more, but this time he actually won.

He held his office for two mandates. In 1900, at the age of 66, he decided to run for mayor of Lennoxville and won that office too. He was the first mayor in a new century, and the future seemed full of possibility.

Unfortunately, only two years later, John unexpectedly passed away from a cardiac arrest. One fateful morning in August, 1902, he woke at his usual early hour, put on his slippers, and shuffled to the far side of the bedroom, where his dresser and washing table stood. Without warning, he collapsed on the floor, hitting his head on the dresser edge as he went down. When Marie-Alice rushed to his side, it was already too late to save him.

Following his death, his doctor discovered that he'd been suffering from an undetected heart condition. He was laid to rest at the St-Antoine Catholic Cemetery in the village, leaving his wife, Marie-Alice, widowed at only 44.

Marie-Alice

After the passing of her husband, Marie-Alice became a nurse at the Anglophone hospital in the city of Sherbrooke not far from Lennoxville. In May 1904, she re-married a notary named Omer Côté and lived with him for nearly eight years before he too passed away suddenly when Marie-Alice was just 54. Having already been twice widowed, she decided to retire from her short career in nursing to do something that she and her first husband John had always dreamed of doing together: open an antiques shop in downtown Lennoxville.

For Marie-Alice, the store was a way of honouring the memory of her first real love, John. Throughout her marriage to

Omer, she'd continued living in the house on Academy Street, and even continued to be known as Mrs. John Dukakis.

Marie-Alice even considered running for mayor herself, to further honour John, but laws in those days did not allow women to hold public office. In fact, women weren't even given the right to vote in Quebec until 1940.

Notwithstanding all this, Marie-Alice was and continued to be an influential figure in Lennoxville, even after the death of both her husbands. She owned and ran the antiques shop from 1912 to 1930, when she was 72.

Aside from politics, and antiques, Marie-Alice had another abiding passion: medicine. Though she worked for a short time as a nurse, she'd really harboured dreams as a young woman of being a doctor. In the 1880's, John was even ready and eager to pay for her medical studies at McGill University in Montreal, but Marie-Alice's parents were staunchly against the idea. They felt her place was at home, raising her children. Unfortunately, Marie-Alice ceded to this pressure and gave up on her dream.

Still, she led a full and happy life, playing many roles: teacher; mother; wife of a municipal councillor and mayor; nurse at the Anglophone hospital; owner of a successful antiques shop. She was a dedicated partner to two loving husbands, though John was the one she remembered most fondly.

She was also an early and ardent supporter of women's rights. In her early nineties, Marie-Alice still firmly believed that someday women would play a more important role in Quebec society, and not be held back the way she had been.

In 1963, Marie-Alice passed away only days before her 105th birthday. It was exceedingly rare in those times for anyone to live past their hundredth birthday. When she achieved this feat, in 1958, she received a signed letter of congratulations from the Prime Minister!

Marie-Alice was laid to rest at John's side in the Saint-Antoine Catholic cemetery. She'd spent 26 years living with John Dukakis before his death in 1902, and over 60 years keeping his memory alive in her heart.

Bonnie & Nil: New Generations

Two years after her mother's death, Bonnie Dukakis decided to run as a municipal councillor in Lennoxville. She was nearly 90 years-old herself by then, but for all her life, had harboured her mother's desire to see women advance in Quebec society. She'd also wished to follow in her father's footsteps and run for office. By the mid-1960s, ideas about women's place in society had begun to shift enough that Bonnie felt she had a chance to run and win. In November 1965, she did just that, and despite her advanced age, was the first female councillor ever elected in Lennoxville.

She remains today the oldest councillor ever elected in the town's history.

Bonnie was indeed her parents' daughter. In 1930, she had taken over the antiques shop from her mother, and of the six children of John and Marie-Alice, Bonnie was the only one to remain in Lennoxville and build a life there. Her relationship with her mother had always been strong. She'd inherited many of Marie-Alice's traits, especially her ambition, her independent spirit, and her desire to change what was worst about the society in which she lived.

She also had a child of her own, Nil, in whom she encouraged a similar spirit of independent thinking. In 1971, at the age of 60, Nil shocked the Lennoxville community by revealing that he was gay. By then, Nil had already been through two marriages, though none had produced children.

It became publicly known that he was romantically involved with a French-speaking Catholic deacon from a church in nearby Sherbrooke: Roger Bibeau. This fueled the scandal of Nil's coming-out even more, since Roger was still married when the news broke, and vicious rumours began to swirl. Mrs. Bibeau herself was thunderstruck. She and her husband had two teenaged children, a son and daughter. Mr. Bibeau, who was in his late 40s, watched his life crumble around him. His congregation abandoned him, and his wife divorced him and moved to Lévis with the children. He never saw them again.

For a long time, Roger was alienated from Nil, angered at the damage their relationship had done to his life and reputation, but eventually the two men reconciled. Love prevailed, and in May 1975, they moved into a house together on Wilson Street, not caring what their neighbours thought or said.

Bonnie had been a firm supporter of her son and his lover from the very beginning, and encouraged them to be open and free with their love. In the summer of 1975—at nearly 100 years-old herself—Bonnie finally stepped down from public life. She convinced Nil to also run for office, following in her footsteps, as well as his grandfather's. Nil first ran for the position his mother had vacated, winning handily. Two years later, he ran for mayor. In 1977, shortly after his mother's death, he became the first openly gay mayor in the history of the province of Quebec, a milestone that his grandfather John Dukakis could never have imagined when he first arrived in Lennoxville almost a century before.

Author's Note: This piece is entirely a work of fiction, and none of the characters are based on actual people. That said, the title of first openly gay mayor in Canada does indeed belong to a Quebecer: Maurice Richard, who was elected as mayor of Bécancour in 1976.

Rhubarb Dance



Bernice Sorge

Journey of Our Ancestors

Laverne Aitchison

James Aitchison was born on Nov. 13, 1833, in Montreal, Quebec. He was the son of Robert Aitchison and Jane Wood of Eckford, Scotland, and married Rachel Cook on Dec. 9, 1865, in Granby, Quebec. Let's now wander down history's trail to see how James's Scottish ancestry ties in with the Eastern Townships.

Quebecers of Scottish descent are often called Scot-Quebecers. While few Scots came to Quebec before the Seven Years' War of 1756-1763, those who did blended in with the French population. From the late 18th century onwards, however, a growing number of Scots sought a better life in the New World. A handful of English-speaking Scottish Lowlanders joined the Scottish exodus. Before 1800, what was to become the Eastern Townships was a heavily wooded region far from the major water transportation routes. After the British conquest, some administrators favoured leaving these southeastern wild lands for future expansion of the French population; others opposed any settlement near the American border in the event that unrest broke out between Britain and the US. Consequently, the area was closed to settlement until 1792, when uncleared land began to be surveyed and divided into townships and 200 acre lots.

The area came to be known as the Eastern Townships, to distinguish it from a region of townships west of the St. Lawrence. Each township was ten square miles, and tenure was

freehold, not seigneurial, as in the older French settlements. Three large judicial districts (Quebec, Trois-Rivières, and Montreal) and several large counties (Buckinghamshire, Richelieu, Bedford, and Huntingdon) angled across township lines. When the electoral boundaries were changed in 1829, several new, primarily English-speaking counties were created: Sherbrooke, Stanstead, Shefford, Missisquoi, Drummond, and Megantic. Stanstead County included the six townships of Barford, Barnston, Stanstead, Potton, Bolton, and Hatley.

Many settlers arrived between 1797 and 1810. In this short period, thousands of settlers transformed the unbroken forest into a patchwork of clearings with buildings, fence rows, farms, and roads. Pioneers were determined that their children receive some kind of education, so schools were founded after 1800, and these independent institutions evolved over half a century into the beginnings of a public-school system in Quebec.

The Aitchisons

James Aitchison's parents, Robert Aitchison and Jane Wood, were married in Eckford, Roxburghshire, Scotland on May 15, 1830. They were from the "Borders," the region along the English-Scottish border, which is Scotland's only land border. It stretches for 96 miles (154 km) between Marshall Meadows Bay in the east and Solway Firth in the west.

Robert and Jane Aitchison were among the many Scotland Lowlanders who journeyed to Quebec to begin a new life. They embarked on their journey to the New World, arriving in Montreal sometime before September 7, 1831 when their first son William was born. They were to have four more children, James, Agnes, Catherine, and Walter, before they moved to Granby prior to 1845. Here they had two more children, Robert and Mary. The 1861 census lists the family as living in Granby with all these children, except William. Also noted in this census are three-year-old triplets, Mary, Jane, and Martha.

On the Granby, Quebec 1861 census, we find three Aitchison families living on farms side-by-side:

- **James Aitchison and Rachel (Cook)**
- **William Aitchison and Elizabeth (Stevenson)**
- **John Aitchison and Mary (Coupland)**

The Aitchison families married into other families living in the Granby/Sherbrooke community: Ainslie, Booth, Carroll, Cook, Coupland, Donaway, Ennis, Farley, Gauthier, Gladdon, Kennedy, Lauder, Lawrence, McGee, Mitchell, Paige, Payne, Riddle, Stevenson, Teece, Whitney, and Woolley to name a just a few.

Discovering my Scottish ancestors who came to the Eastern Townships of Quebec so many years ago has given me great pleasure, and led to even more interest in my forebears. Maybe you, too, can locate some Scots in your own family tree!

The Unseen



Unheard

Elsie Sullivan

In the late 18th and 19th centuries, women were considered non-persons and had the same negligible rights as indigenous people. In 1870, Canada passed the Married Women's Property Act, which allowed women to inherit property and keep ownership of their own estate. Up until this time a woman, upon marriage, lost title to her property, which was then deeded to her husband.

Upon the husband's death, his eldest son inherited all the worldly goods, and often the widow was left destitute. The Act of 1870 was quite progressive but many provinces ignored it. This essay will discuss life in the Eastern Townships in the 19th century, and the impact of pioneer living on women.

Families were considered sacred and divorce did not occur often in the colonies. Women lived in intimate relationships with men who kept them in a state of powerlessness. The bush farmer had very little time for developing a social vision. The demands of the land created a frontier logic, and the victims of this logic were women.

After the American War of Independence, the American economy was in desperate trouble. The American families who came across the border were mainly from the northern states, and did nothing to strengthen the state of the economy: poor

farming practices were common, clear-cutting of trees created soil erosion, and the practice of cutting up family farms into smaller parcels made farming these small acreages economically unfeasible.

Farmers looked north and saw untouched forests and uncultivated lands. A great surge of migrants followed, some buying and others squatting on land in what is now the Eastern Townships. These farmers settled in what would later become known as “the outback.”

The men were eager to tame this new land, but their wives were often reluctant and resentful pioneers. In their former homes, they enjoyed a close community of women who could be called upon to aid in childbirth, medical emergencies, and in dealing with abusive husbands. Pioneer wives also exchanged moderately comfortable living quarters for a shack in the woods with a dirt floor and a hole in the roof for smoke to escape. Often alone in the wilderness, sometimes with an abusive husband, these women faced unbearable isolation, particularly in the winter. This isolation, coupled with the loss of a dependable community, caused many social taboos to be disregarded, and marriage between close relatives was not uncommon.

Immigrants also came from England, often for economic reasons. At the end of the Napoleonic Wars, soldiers—and particularly officers—were dismissed from active duty on very small pensions. Canada was seen as a place where opportunities for such men were boundless. In her book *Roughing it in the Bush*, Susanna Moodie writes, “The infection became general. The Canadian mania pervaded the middle ranks of British society.” Tens of thousands of English immigrants landed on these shores, and a large number were army and navy officers, a class perfectly unfit for the stern realities of pioneer life.

In 1874, B.F. Hubbard wrote *Forests and Clearings*, a collection of stories of families who settled in the Eastern Townships, mainly in Stanstead Township. Although Hubbard’s intention was not to dwell on or draw attention to the terrible lives of

pioneer women, he did collect tales of their hardships from their daughters.

The first story is by Mrs. Rosanna Flanders, daughter of Ebenezer Hovey:

“In March 1794 my Father, making a small clearing and putting up a small shanty, returned to Connecticut and again set out with his team of oxen, carrying his wife, eight children, their bedding and supplies. They came by way of Missisquoi Bay and were seven days going through woods from Frelighsburg to Lake Memphremagog. The snow was deep and the women and children suffered. In many instances, the women had to unload and reload the sleds and wade through snow and water.”

A similar story is told by Mrs. Lemuel Fish:

“They left their home in Reading, Vermont with an ox team loaded with their bedding and a limited supply of provisions. The ox team was sent home and they set out on foot to seek a home on the eastern shore of Lake Memphremagog, the mother carrying a baby all the way.”

Did these pioneers realize that they were in desperate circumstances? They must have, because they did not even have suitable clothing. Women wore inadequate shawls and skirts which became heavy with mud and snow. While men wore Indian moccasins, there is no mention of women’s footwear. When settlers finally reached their shacks in the woods, hunger, exhaustion, and death must have been very close.

Young women of the late 18th and 19th centuries married at a very early age. It was common for women to be pregnant from their first year of marriage until they reached menopause. Death from child-bed fever often occurred with the first pregnancy. There was also very little assistance provided for these women.

Pregnancy was not allowed to interfere with either the women’s work in the fields or in the house. Chores such as weaving and spinning had to be done in order to clothe an ever-

growing family. Gardens had to be cultivated in order to provide food for the long winters. Life was a drudgery from morning until night. A widowed farmer, when asked what he looked for in a new wife, replied that he didn't care what she looked like as long as she was as strong as an ox. Many women died of exhaustion in their early forties. This sad fact can be seen on tombstones in country cemeteries.

Jan Vansittart collected the letters from one British immigrant family and published them as *Lifelines, The Stacey Papers*. The Stacy family arrived in the Townships in 1836 and left immediately for land they had bought near Ascot Corner. Mr. Stacy had left England under a cloud, having the choice between emigrating or going to debtors' prison.

The Staceys had no knowledge of clearing land or farming, so it was not surprising that George Stacey was soon in debt again. He was taken to prison in Sherbrooke and the family's furniture was seized to pay the money owing. With three small children and winter approaching, George's wife Eliza harvested the potatoes and prepared to store the root vegetables. Luckily the firewood had been cut but had not been stacked. Did her life improve? No, she died at forty-four of exhaustion and a lack of medical assistance. She had given birth to eight living children, and had had five miscarriages. She had not left the farm in twenty-two long years. We remember Susanna Moodie's words: "After years of exile the hope of return grows feeble. A feeling very closely allied to that which the condemned criminal entertains for his cell; his only hope of escape being through the portals of the grave."

Was the life of Eliza Stacey unusually desperate? Apparently not, if we look across the border. The lives of American women did not improve much following the Revolution. Abigail Adams wrote to her husband, President John Adams, "I desire you would remember the ladies and be more generous to them than your ancestors. There should be property rights and protection against abusive husbands."

President Adams ignored the letter from his wife: property rights were not granted to American women until 1880.

This essay discusses only women living in the outback. Small towns such as Sherbrooke were relatively pleasant places to live. Townswomen could purchase material from the local merchants and produce very handsome quilts and needlework, while those in the outback made quilts from worn-out clothing.

Certainly not all women living in the outback of Stanstead Township led terrible lives, but numbers do indicate that many died at an early age. The sad truth of outback life is that it was short and often brutal; there was no escape for these pioneer women. They had no rights under the laws of that time, and their isolation made them easy targets for mistreatment.

Body & Oil



Bernice Sorge

New Beginnings

Kathleen Lynch

In the mid-1800s, Mary Brown (née Cumming) left Ireland to come to Canada with her daughter Martha and son Andrew. Being the widow of James Brown, who had been a yeoman of the king, Mary was granted crown land between Trenholmvile and St. Felix-de-Kingsey.

Andrew, with the help of neighbours, built a house for his family to live in, and eventually a barn. In due course he married Mary Armstrong, and built another house beside that of his mother and sister Martha, who never married.

Sadly, when Andrew and Mary's son, James, was born, Mary died giving birth, so Andrew took the baby and went to live next door with his mother and sister. After a time, he married his deceased wife's sister, Elizabeth, and moved back into his own house.

James grew up, married Melissa Towne and had four children: James, William, Roxina, and Mary. Andrew and his extended family all worked hard, as every pioneering family had to do.

On that little farm they grew their own food, including vegetables, apples and plums, and they made maple syrup. They took their grain to Dennison Mills to be ground into flour so that they could make bread and other baked goods. I remember my grandfather saying they were allowed to exchange a day's labour to pay for the grinding of the grain and odds and ends from the store which was across the road from the mill.

I also remember my mother saying Grammy Brown made the best plum jam she had ever eaten! It wasn't all hard work; there

were house and barn dances. William played the fiddle, James the mouth organ, and Roxina the mandolin. I think times weren't as complicated back then.

History of the Norton Castle & Family

A contribution from the

Beaulne Museum

in Coaticook, Quebec

The Norton family has been connected with Coaticook for more than a century and has left a lasting impression upon the town of Coaticook and the Eastern Townships. Undoubtedly, Château Norton is the most interesting reminder of the family left behind.



Built in 1912, Château A. O. Norton was nicknamed "Norrich place" combining the names Norton and Richardson.



*Arthur Osmore Norton
(1845-1919)*

Arthur Osmore Norton was born on the 17th of February 1845, on a farm in the township of Barnston, a few kilometers from Coaticook. His parents, Arunah Norton and Fannie Huntoon, were born in Canada while his grandparents came from New England.

After elementary school and Barnston Academy, Arthur Osmore Norton, at the age of sixteen, entered the world of business as a

clerk in a general store. Later, he joined the manufacturing sector as a partner in a jewellery factory in Boston. In 1888, he opened a railroad jack manufacturing plant in Coaticook, after buying the marketing rights to this particular jack from its inventor, engineer Frank Sleeper of Coaticook,

Francis “Frank” Sleeper is the inventor of what eventually became known as the “Norton jack.” Sleeper was a highly skilled machinist, and his creativity and ingenuity led him to invent over 350 machines, tools, and equipment throughout his life. Born in 1862 in Coaticook, he died in Florida in 1937. He manufactured the first jacks at the Norton plant until his brother, Orion Hopkinson, took over in 1892.



*Frank Sleeper
(1862-1937)*

NORTON PLANTS

Destruction of the first Norton plant by fire in December 1913 led to the construction of the new plant on Cutting Street. During the same period, A. O. Norton owned a factory in Boston, U.S.A., also specializing in the manufacture of jacks.

After the death of A. O. Norton in 1919, his son, Harry Arunah, sold the company to the firm Borg & Beck of Chicago. This firm, in turn, sold it in 1928 to the Duff Manufacturing

Company. This represented the birth of Duff-Norton in the U.S. and later in Canada. Finally, in 1946, the plant closed in Coaticook and operations were transferred to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.



*The manufacture of jacks & shells
during the war (1914-1918)*

THE NORTON FAMILY

In 1870, Arthur Osmore Norton married Helen Maria Richardson. Helen was the daughter of a prominent businessman from Coaticook. Their first residence was Helen's childhood home on Union Street.



Helen Maria Richardson (1847-1929)

Their son, Harry Arunah Norton, was born in 1872. He studied at the Academy of Coaticook and at Bishop's College. He interrupted his studies to help his father start the plant in Boston. In 1906, Harry embarked on a trip around the globe to promote the company. He sent postcards to his clients and friends. The company slogan was "He Makes Good Jacks!" In 1907, he married Elizabeth Sidney Austin of Coaticook. The couple had no children. Harry died in 1948 at age 78.

Arthur and Helen's daughter, Mary Helen Norton, was born in 1876. Like her brother Harry, she too led a privileged life, travelling the world and even once being received at court in England. Mary Helen never married, and after the death of her father in 1919, she took care of her mother until the latter died in 1929. Heir to the Château, she maintained it until 1942. On September 11, 1967, Mary Helen died at her residence in Ayer's Cliff, Quebec.



Harry Norton c. 1945



Mary Helen Norton (1876-1967)

A DRIVER AND A HANDYMAN



*A.O. Norton & his driver, Frederick Cochey,
in a Thomas Flyer, Touring Model 1905*

Frederick Cochey was the driver assigned to the family. Both A.O. Norton and his daughter included him in their wills. George William Cunningham was the handyman of the house. He worked nearly 30 years for the family.

EXTERIOR (CHÂTEAU)

The grounds of the Château comprise several lots, including lot no 100, where there used to be a brick hotel built in 1889, called the Queen's Hotel. The location of this hotel can be readily tied to its proximity to the railway line, linking Coaticook to Montreal and also the United States. This situation may have led Mr. Norton to acquire adjacent lots, as he used the trains frequently to go to Montreal or Boston.

The construction in 1912 of Château Norton confirmed Mr. Norton's local reputation as a wealthy man. The dimensions of the building are surprising as they exceed by a wide margin those of the typical house found in Coaticook, and indeed suggest a château or manor. The most noteworthy features of the house include its abundance of windows, and its variety of



Extension at the rear of the Château

its architectural influences: for instance, Greco-Roman columns, turrets with hexagonal roofs (a hallmark of the Neo-Queen-Ann style), and classic stone chimneys. The fenestration is relatively abundant, and large sliding doors appear on the north side.

INTERIOR (CHÂTEAU)

The ground floor, with more than a dozen rooms, is undoubtedly the most interesting part of the building, from an architectural point of view. The interior decoration of both the ground and upper floors reflects the influence of classical Greco-Roman architecture. The wood used was mainly oak.

One can identify two categories of rooms, each with its own distinct architectural characteristics. In the rooms of the first category, the decor is lavish, and the interior architectural elements classical. In the drawing and dining rooms, for instance, the integration of the fireplace reflects the classical decor. In Mr. Norton's study, a contrary effect seems to have been sought by the construction of a field-stone fireplace without any classical architectural influence.

The second category of rooms on both the ground and upper floors offer a substantial contrast to the rooms previously described. Here, classical architecture has been set aside, and interior decoration is much simpler. We are here in the servants' quarters (no photographs available).

The second floor contains fourteen rooms. As on the ground floor, a long corridor traverses nearly the entire building along the North-South axis. The North wing of the house, used by the Nortons, has a floor layout similar to that found on the ground floor. As on the ground floor, there are four fireplaces. The other rooms, in the servants' quarters, are smaller and less concerned with symmetry.

The third and top floor contains four rooms of various sizes. The ceilings and walls reflect the slopes of the roof. This is particularly noticeable in the documentation or records room.



A.O. Norton's Study

Here again the architectural decoration is limited; only the large room presently used for exhibitions contains interesting features such as hardwood flooring, baseboards, and castings—particularly the castings found in the turrets.



Drawing Room

THE BEAULNE MUSEUM TODAY INSIDE THE NORTON CASTLE

Housed since 1977 within the walls of the Château Norton, Beaulne Museum offers a permanent exhibition, temporary exhibitions, travelling exhibitions and other services relating to research, education, and cultural activities.

The permanent exhibition showcases the exterior and interior architecture of the Château and the history of the Norton family. The large living room, dining room, and master bedroom show the reconstitution of a middle-class home during the period 1885-1915.

The luxurious furnishings and beautiful woodwork add to the Château's magnificence. The office of Mr. Arthur Norton, henceforth the Norton-Desjardins Hall, is the jack room, displaying the tool behind the fortune that allowed the construction of the Château in the first place.

CONCLUSION

Arthur Osmore Norton etched his family name into the history of the town of Coaticook by building his Château. The Beaulne Museum, which is presently located in Norton Château, continues to play a significant role in the community as a major tourist attraction, and an important venue for local arts and culture.

Stepping into the Past: Reading a Nineteenth- century Farmwife's Journal

Anne F. Holloway

In 1979, we bought a small A-frame house in Sutton Township to use as a weekend home. Behind the house I found a row of stones and boulders of all sizes, the smaller ones now camouflaged by moss and decaying leaves, which marked the boundaries of former fields. The trees around me had grown up after the land was no longer farmed, turning field into scrubby bush which gradually became a forest of tall spindly trees. What was life like for those families in the nineteenth century who decided to settle here? Little did I know then that many years later I would be writing about just such a family.

When our children were in their late teens I decided to take a course in creative writing at Concordia University. I enjoyed it so much that I kept taking courses in English literature and creative writing. During this time, I became interested in women's journals written in the nineteenth century describing their lives in Canada.

In June 2000, I took an early retirement from work, but I wasn't ready to stop being a student. It would be interesting, I thought, to study early journals written by women living in the Eastern Townships. But how and where to find them? Until quite recently, women's diaries were generally regarded as having little archival or literary value. The ones that have been preserved were probably kept for sentimental reasons and then passed on

to the next generation, given to local museums, or stored away to be forgotten in attics. To help me in my search, I took a course in historical research methods. Other history courses followed, leading me eventually to a Master's degree.

It was around this time that I had a chance conversation with a friend, John Staton, who'd once owned an old house in Mansonville. He'd bought the house in an estate sale, and discovered an intriguing assortment of abandoned items in the attic, such as unidentified portraits taken in the early days of photography, anonymous handwritten poems, and moralistic short stories. There was a bill for the repair of a washed-out road with a recipe for ice cream scribbled on the back, as well as a contract dated April 1, 1873, for the building of a house: "... to be twenty-two by twenty-six – shed to be twenty-four and veranda running the length of said shed... Charles White to help put up the building – help board it – and shingle it alone... to be paid when finished." In a wooden box, along with some glass negatives, were bundles of foolscap paper folded and hand-stitched to form booklets: a journal written by a farm wife, Eliza Calkins White, from 1852 until 1874.

John had donated most of the items to the Brome County Historical Society museum in Knowlton, which later published a transcription of the journal. When I started to read it, I realized that this might be a good research subject. My thesis supervisor thought so too, which was encouraging.

As I needed to work from the original document, I soon became a fixture at the museum, spending many hours reading the journal and transcribing the long prayers at the end of many entries that had not been included in the published version. Later, I was back at the museum trawling through microfilms of nineteenth-century censuses, looking for information on the family, the farm, and the local population.

Although Eliza typically wrote every day, there are sometimes gaps of months and even years in the journal. These gaps are not necessarily because sections have been lost or destroyed. In some instances, entries from different years appear on the same page.

When the journal entries begin, in July, 1852, Eliza and her husband Kneeland are in their forties with nine children, eight of whom are still living at home. Their youngest child is only two. I often wondered how Eliza found the time and energy to write at all!

What motivated her to keep a journal? Was it to give herself and her family a sense of accomplishment and purpose? Something they could look back on later in life, or pass on to future generations?

The journal is personal, as one would expect of a truly private diary. Eliza often asks God to forgive her sins, or help her be a better person, or even end her "miserable life." Despite this, Eliza didn't seem to mind others reading the journal. She let her children have access to it, and on at least one occasion, showed it to someone outside the family. On March 3, 1854, she writes "miss Este has been examining this this [sic] book and I hope she found it interesting" (Miss Este was likely the local school teacher). On one of the rare occasions when Eliza was away from home, one of her children writes in the journal that "At Mothers request I am to keep "books" till she gets back." This entry shows how important the journal was to Eliza as a form of record-keeping. Still, even as a record, it often lacks pertinent information, such as the sums involved in various financial transactions, and the full names of visitors. It also includes lengthy prayers, excerpts from the Bible, hymns, and other literature, as well as some poems which may be Eliza's own compositions.

Reading the journal is somewhat like watching a train go by. The entries are a stream of facts, with little or no elaboration and barely a hint of emotion. In March 1856, she writes that "Abel worked for Frank Pebody to day Frank was taken sick last night and had the docter Francis helped his pa and Charley scatter the buckets and then went to mill medora at Olivers Kneeland tapt part of the sugar place I went to marthas marietta done chores and embroidered Royal here to breakfast and went to the lake Lord forgive all our sins." When quoting from Eliza's

journal, I've kept her original punctuation, or rather the lack of it, as well as her spelling and grammar. There's the danger in amending sentence structure that the original meaning may be misinterpreted. The fact that she knew how to punctuate, as shown by some entries, but didn't take the time to do so, suggests that proper grammar was less important to her than getting the information down while she had time. The flow of her words, uninterrupted by commas or periods, reflects the unrelenting pace of her work-filled life.

The entries for each day are a succinct report of who did what, and who came and went from the house. They reveal little of Eliza's inner self or her emotional connections. Though she writes that family members are "taken sick," she rarely expresses concern for them, and very few of her prayers include supplications on their behalf, even under troubling circumstances. For instance, the sudden illness and death of her son Frank's baby only warrants a brief mention.

To establish any coherence in the journal, I needed to know more about the people Eliza mentions frequently. For the most part, she uses first names or last names, sometimes abbreviating them or using a diminutive for the first name. She rarely identifies her relationship with the many people visiting her house. Nor is she consistent in her spelling of names. Yet her neighbours, living a similar life within the same community, knowing the same people, and using the same language, would have been able to interpret the journal. It's only the outsider like myself who is perplexed.

At the very least, I needed to be able to identify members of Eliza's family. Then a strange and lucky coincidence occurred. By this time I had moved to Knowlton but was also renting an apartment in Montreal. I learned that some acquaintances in Knowlton, Marilyn and Walter Stairs, were looking for a place to stay in Montreal for a few nights a week, so I offered them the spare room in my apartment. The first time they came I had my copy of the published transcript of Eliza's journal on the coffee table; I thought they might be interested in seeing it. To my

surprise, Marilyn was already familiar with the journal because her aunt, Doris White Cameron, is Eliza's great granddaughter. Furthermore Mrs. Cameron is an ardent genealogist with records of her family history going back to 1597. This was exciting news!

Not long afterwards I visited Mrs. Cameron, who generously shared the information she had collected about her ancestors. Near the end of my project, I wanted to take some photos of the area where Eliza and her family had lived, so I was taken on a tour by Marilyn and Walter, with Mrs. Cameron as our guide. All that remains of the farm buildings today is an outline of moss-covered foundation stones half-buried in the woods on the edge of a dirt road.

Thanks to Mrs. Cameron's genealogy, I could identify the members of Eliza's family in the journal. I tracked the references to each family member using a database program, following their stories separately through the pages of the journal, in order to ascertain who in the household performed which tasks, and how often.

I also learned that Eliza and Kneeland were married in Hyde Park, a town in northern Vermont named for Eliza's grandfather, Jedediah Hyde. For information on the couple's life prior to the journal entries, I consulted an 1864 Hyde family genealogy, which recorded that Eliza, Kneeland, and their five children (the eldest eleven) moved from Hyde Park to Bolton in 1839, in what was then called Lower Canada. From an 1842 census, I learned that the Whites subsequently moved to Potton Township, had a sixth child, and now owned two hundred acres of farmland, twenty-eight of which were "improved."

Why did they move north? Perhaps because land was cheaper and more available. Many of the settlers moving into Potton Township in the early 1800s came from the United States, mostly from New England. Eliza and Kneeland may have known some of those people.

Eliza and her family were part of a community that, in effect, encompassed both sides of the Quebec-Vermont border. She writes about trips to North Troy to trade, pick up newspapers,

mail and collect letters, and visit Eliza's married daughter, Maria. On at least two occasions, Eliza sent for a doctor from North Troy. Some of her children, when they were in their teens, lived there during the week to go to school. There was also the occasional trip back to Hyde Park.

The season-driven cycle of work varied little throughout the years of the journal. Washing was done on Mondays, and Saturday entries nearly always include "Saturdays work," though what this covers is never specified. It may refer to chores done in preparation for Sunday, a day of rest when most of the family went to various prayer meetings. Almost all the Sunday entries begin with "this is the sabbath," though Eliza rarely went to a prayer meeting. Perhaps the poor health she refers to in her prayers made attendance difficult. The rest of the week Eliza and "the girls" were busy providing for the household with such tasks as carding and spinning, knitting and sewing, ironing, cleaning, quilting and weaving, cutting carpet rags and baking. Then there were the unspecified "chores," which would have included preparing all the meals and cleaning up after them.

An almost constant stream of people came and went from the house. Neighbours helped with farm work, sometimes as hired labour. Members of her family worked on other farms. The Whites borrowed and lent an assortment of tools and equipment, saddles, horses, wagons, fanning mills, horse rakes, sleighs, ploughs, cradles and kettles. Occasionally, itinerant salesmen would call. Visits to and fro on Sundays and weekday evenings were probably social. Eliza rarely mentions the purpose of these visits, except in the fall when neighbouring families got together to pare and slice apples, which were then threaded onto strings of cotton yarn and hung to dry.

Dried apples and maple sugar were important marketable products, which involved both male and female labour to produce. Women helped the men with the outdoor work of picking the apples, while the men in turn helped the women indoors, processing the fruit. Generally, the men and boys looked after the tapping of the maple trees in early spring and

the preliminary boiling to reduce the sap to syrup. It was often the women and girls who completed the boiling process, turning syrup into sugar.

The significance of women's labour in the rural economy, which was overlooked by historians until recently, is evident in the journal. Items made by Eliza and her daughters, which could be sold or bartered in the local market, were an essential contribution to the economic stability of the White family.

The journal shows that bartering, or "trading" as it was called, was still an important part of the local economy in the second half of the nineteenth century. And it wasn't always the men deciding the value of the goods being traded or sold. Eliza and her daughters visited various stores with products from the farm in order to trade with the merchants, make purchases, and settle debts, showing that the women had a keen business sense. "I sold 4,3 pounds of dried apples to Robinson and settled the book," Eliza wrote in December, 1860. The women also crossed the border to trade in North Troy, and sometimes made substantial purchases. On one occasion, Eliza obtained "a stand and stone pot and two wheels and chest of drawers." My favourite trade is one noted in 1873, when a man who came to the house "bought twelve bushels of apples" and "paid two dollars and a half and a little dog." I wonder if this dog was kept in the barn, or became a house pet. In any case, there is no other mention of it in the journal.

"I am sixty five today and it is Bells birth day also," Eliza writes on June 2, 1874 (Bell was one of her daughters). The next day's entry is Eliza's last. Why did she stop writing? Did poor health prevent her from continuing? Entries from a few weeks earlier are written in a different hand, probably Bell's. "Ma has such a pain in her shoulder," these entries begin, "she has gone to bed and left me to write." Over the next few days, Eliza's health fluctuates. "Ma had a very bad night tonight . . . Ma better . . . Ma improving . . . Ma not feeling well." One of Eliza's daughter-in-laws, who had been sick for some time, had died two weeks earlier. Perhaps Eliza was too busy helping care for her

grandchildren, as well as her own children, and lacked the energy and motivation to continue writing. Finally, she herself died in 1883.

Journals such as Eliza White's are intriguing. They answer some questions and generate others which can never be answered. Hers is the story of a farm family getting through life as best as they can, under the circumstances. Without such journals, the work of women like Eliza and her daughters would remain invisible.

Though my journey through this story was long, and at times tedious and frustrating, I enjoyed the challenge, learned new skills and found out things about the lives of women in the nineteenth century that I hadn't know before. I'm very glad I had this opportunity to contribute a little to the history of the Eastern Townships.

There was a second journal in John Staton's attic, that of Eliza's daughter, Bell. There are a few pages written when she was living away from home, and the rest starts in 1898. Maybe now that I have finished working on Eliza's diary, I'll finally take a closer look at Bell's.

REFLECTIONS



Burdock Dance
BOTANICAL PRINT SERIES
Bernice Sorge

REFLECTIONS



Burdock Dance

BOTANICAL PRINT SERIES

Bernice Sorge

Dances on the Magog River

Haydn Juby

A smooth-scaled trout glides in the Magog's sway,
looking for dancing mayflies from below.

She thrusts herself up towards her floating prey,
and sips down a winged partner from the flow.

A hidden fisherman's hook pricks her lips,
causing her to leap for the rising sun.

Her stride only brings her closer to his hips,
but her whirl with him has only begun.

She snaps his line like a cracking whip,
just as he swoops down at her with his net.

She watches the fool stumble and trip,
falling into the Magog, soaking wet.

The entire dance she had known his guise;

she had just grown tired of dancing with the flies.

A Townships Birther Morality Play

Colin MacGregor

A soft, downy snow descended on the quiet glens and sleepy brooks outside the village of Six Oaks. Wild ducks played on the icy surface of Quaint Lake, little suspecting they had missed their mark and failed to fly south for the winter on time. Dutch Duck Disease had ravaged the local waterfowl population, with devastating results.

Inside Sleepy Village Tavern, a small crowd of men in frock coats and top hats kicked the snow off their boots, disrobed, and entered the grand vestibule. Alongside them were elegant women in bustle skirts and frilly collars, dusting Mother Nature's dandruff off their clothes to settle in front of the hearth fire and await the guests of honour.

Dramatically, in walked two tall, straight-backed, dapper men; one, a study in intellectual rigour, with flowing white hair and piercing eyes; the other, older, somewhat bizarre with bright yellow hair combed over the front of his scalp.

The innkeeper came running from the servants' quarters to greet the two men. "Hello, Inspector Andre Goulash," he said in a raspy voice. "And who do we have the pleasure of welcoming to our quiet border town in the Eastern Townships, which is where we are?"

"Gaby," said the inspector with gravitas (as he said everything with gravitas), "this is my New York business friend who's just come up on the train, John D. Crump."

Gaby bowed. "The pleasure's all mine. Would you like a muffin? I bake them myself."

"I'm well aware the pleasure's all yours," Crump replied. "I'm fabulous. This place is fabulous. What's not fabulous is what's happening to my country. No muffins."

They prepared to meet the local gentry, who were anxious to learn why they had been convoked to this place on a Saturday morning—Six Oaks' traditional horse- and cat-grooming morning.

"Ladies and gentlemen," Goulash began, "as everyone is aware, three months ago, on September 19th, American President James Garfield was assassinated. Our own local hero, Vice President Chester Alan Arthur, took his place, thus assuming the mantle of most powerful person in the free world outside of God's Majestic Queen Victoria, Empress of India and ruler of the British Empire."

"And the Tsar," piped up Mrs. Criswell, the town know-it-all. "He's pretty powerful."

"Who's the Grand Vizier of Turkey?" chimed in Mr. Cowan, whose face more and more resembled the cattle that had made his fortune. "He runs quite the empire. Not to mention the Hapsburg Archduke of Austria, chancellor Bismarck in Germany, the Emperor of China..."

"Alright, alright," stuttered Goulash. "I get your point. Still, the President is right up there. Don't forget, I have a degree in modern history and police stuff from Cambridge."

Mrs. Criswell shook her head. "And yet you work for the Quebec Provincial Police. Out here. What are we missing, exactly? This all reminds me of something... wasn't your name Gamache until..."

"NO," Goulash said firmly, but with gravitas. "That would be copyright infringement. At any rate, let's get back to why we're here in Three, uh, Six Oaks. We're all quite proud of our Chester, even though he was the most corrupt man in America while he was Collector of the Port of New York. With his finger on

the pulse of half of America's imports, he doled out bribes and embezzled funds to his heart's content."

"Not true," Crump mumbled. "Media lies. Chester Arthur was a fabulous port administrator. I should know. I imported tons of fine porcelain and gi-na through the port, and nothing was broken. Not a plate."

"You mean china?" asked Mrs. Criswell.

"Yankee pronunciation," shrugged Goulash. "At any rate, that was years ago, and we're now in 1881. Corruption in high places is a thing of the past! We're a modern society now. God save the Queen!"

Crump shifted uneasily on his feet. "Talk about the Sun," he grumbled.

"Yes," Goulash said, "I was getting to that. Two days after Arthur was sworn in as President, the bounders and scoundrels at the *New York Sun* published a full exposé of Chester's true birth, in our beloved Bedford. Read the story, Crump."

Crump pulled out a crumpled bit of newsprint from his waistcoat and began mumbling: "...the child born in Fairfield, Vermont was named Chester Abell Arthur. They say that this boy died in Burlington, and that the body was given by the father to physicians to be dissected for scientific purposes. Then William Arthur..."

"Chester's Irish-born father," interrupted Goulash, "an itinerant preacher and teacher, was teaching in Bedford, and was working in Stanbridge East and Bedford when Chester was born. Not only was the future President born north of the border, but his father was a British subject, which means by American law, the child was born British. Double jeopardy!"

The Anglican Reverend Tom Swift, a famous local sceptic, harrumphed. "But the President's middle name is Alan," he growled. "Not Abell. He was born in Fairfield, everyone knows that. And besides, who cares? How many presidents were born British, given that the states were once our colonies? Well run, too, by God-fearing people beholden to the monarch? Who were then soiled of soul and turned against their betters?"

Cowan agreed: "Besides, Bedford has turned out lots of outstanding people, like that man in the carnival with three nostrils."

The assembled talked amongst themselves, in some shock. Crump mumbled under his breath, "There ought to be a wall..."

Goulash waved a majestic hand. Silence descended upon the room. "Why is it important? Because of the 14th amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which spells out..."

Crump shot out, "That anyone aspiring to the presidency or the vice-presidency must be born on American soil, an American citizen. Good thing too. Ratified in 1867."

"Oh," said the Rev. Swift. "Missed that one. We were awfully busy that year."

"President Arthur," said Crump, stepping forward, his unnaturally yellow hair curiously prismatic in the flickering firelight, "lied repeatedly about his birth date during the campaign. On one stop he said he was born in 1829; on another, in 1830... He knew it would be an issue. Once he told *The Brooklyn Eagle* that his father was 40 years of age when Chester was born, when in fact his father was 33. Chester's older sister was born in Dunham; at least they freely admit that much. Chester's mother Malvina's family lived in Canada when Chester came into the world. Inspector?"

The assembled gasped as one: a unified gasp.

Goulash solemnly intoned: "The President switched his identity with that of a dead infant when his ambitions took hold, I am sure of that. The evidence points that way. Arthur himself said to supporters after Garfield was elected, as reported in *The New York Times* of February 12th of this very year: "I don't think we should go into the secrets of the campaign ... I don't mean to say anything about my birthplace, whether it was in Canada or elsewhere."

"He's a bad hombre," Crump nodded. "Lock him up."

"This," concluded Goulash, "is a presidency born ... of death."

Mrs. Criswell sighed. "It's always death with you, Inspector Goulash. Any time you're around, bodies pop up here and there.

When you're away, we're just fine. Nothing happens. You're a pox, you are."

Six Oaks' Mayor Bentley rose, clearly concerned. "Please Goulash," he almost whimpered. "Why don't you take us up on our offer to go abroad? Enroll in a master's program in history and police stuff at Cambridge. We'll pay you."

"Anything you want," seconded Rev. Swift. "Just go. Please."

"I've got a counter-offer," shot back Crump. "I love deals. I will pay ... any price ... to establish that this Arthur cad was born up here. In your country. Which I love, by the way, just love. You're all fabulous. Great views. I'll buy whatever it takes. Researchers, historians, snoops, anything. I'll even buy your inn, Gaby. Turn it into a fabulous luxury hotel. Big time. Who runs the historical society up here, anyway?"

Mrs. Elvira Pickersgill, the town schoolteacher, kicked her bustle skirt to one side and stood, peering over her reading glasses at Crump. "I am, Mr. Crump, the chairperson of the Six Oaks Historical Society and Charity Bazaar Committee."

"Nice to meet you."

She cleared her throat before speaking again: "People don't take kindly round these parts to outsiders trying to tear down our local heroes, you know. Not every day we get a U.S. President we can call our own."

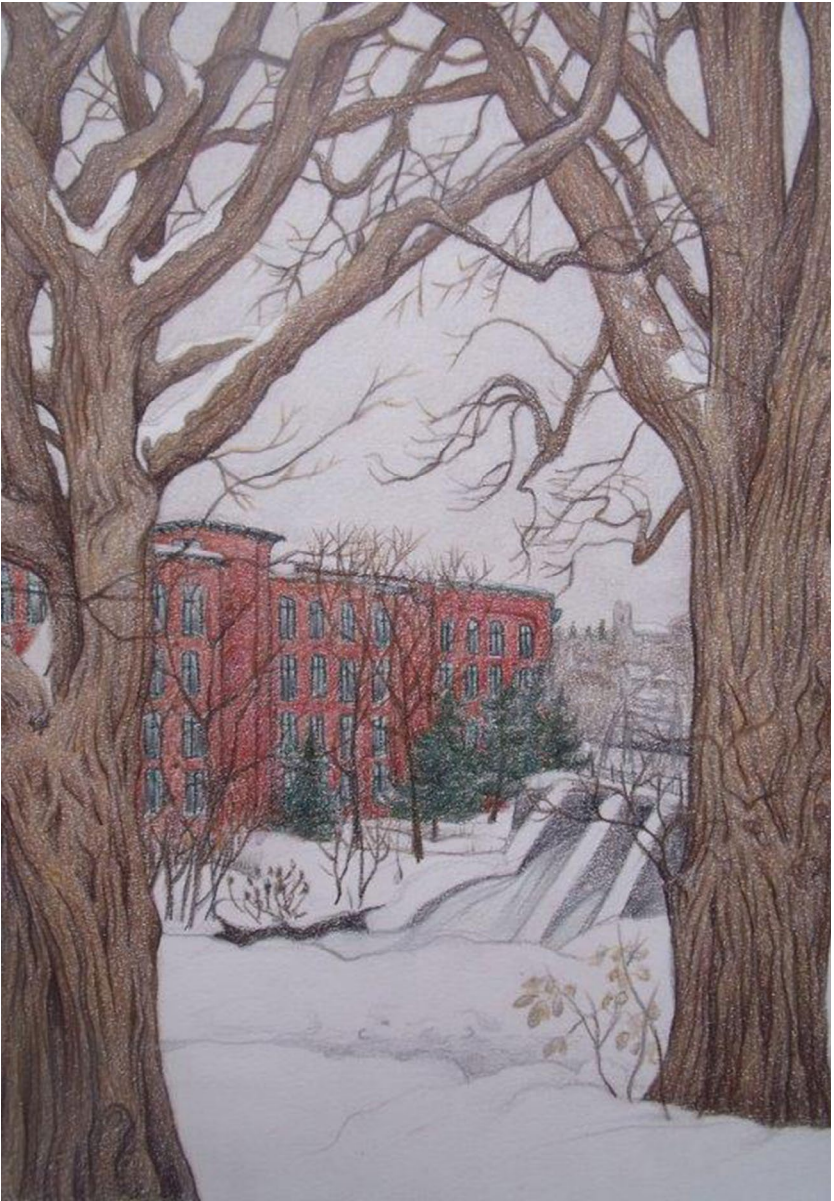
"Listen, toots," Crump growled. "Name your price. I want Arthur out of office, and you can't stop me."

"Toots?" Mrs. Pickersgill yelled. "What does toots mean, exactly?"

"Yankee euphemism," Goulash mumbled into his starched collar. "Came across the word at the British Museum Library, actually. It means, um, er..."

As one, the women present stood, noses in the air, and silently walked out into the snow. Thus ending the first of many birther dreams.

Paton Oaks



Susanne Speidel

Saint Frig

Yann Geoffroy

“The squirrels are comin’! The squirrels are comin’! Don’t shoot ‘til you see the whites of their eyes. But wait, their eyes is all black and they’re comin’, scurryin’ quickly. Look they’re swarmin’ now. I can’t. I can’t hold. I’m gonna start shootin’ I swear to it. I don’t have enough ammo to kill them all. They’re gonna eat us alive, from the feet up. Oh it’s gonna hurt so bad, so much pain is comin’ our way.”

Grandpa stopped rocking and slammed his stick on the porch. The squirrels had seen it all before and forgotten. They continued to approach Grandpa’s cucumber and fake cheese sandwich that sat on a plate on a stool in front of his chair.

The grandchildren hollered at him.

“Grandpa, them squirrels is gonna eat yer cucumber sannich! Look out grandpa.” Dale threw an acorn at the squirrel but missed and hit Grandpa in the shin.

“Oh, they got me!” Grandpa bellowed. “They bit my leg clean off. The eatin’s gonna start now and oh the mountain of pain I’m gonna feel. Their mouths is so small and their little buckteeth so sharp. Oh it’s gonna take days and if the agony don’t kill, or if they get tired of eating me from the feet up or if they fill up their little sinner bellies then it’ll be the rabies that finishes me off. Oh, I’m gonna get the lock jaw and the anger is gonna seethe and blow in me. I can feel it happening already. Oh the rage, I just wanna bite somethin’ meaty. I don’t want no cucumber sannich no more, I want a granchillen! I’m gonna eat me a kid.”

Grandpa hit his gnarled stick on the porch again. The squirrels bolted and the children screamed and ran off in all

directions laughing. They threw their hands in the air, and fell all over the lawn like tumbling gnomes. Grandpa grinned and felt total joy and all at once was ready to die and never wanted to die. He looked up at the sky and saw the blue beyond the low white cumulonimbus and knew space went for always.

The kids were hiding somewhere on the edges of the lawn. The yard, deserted, scared him. The squirrels only wanted one thing and he wouldn't give it to them. They'd found their way into the roof and made nests. He'd repaired the roof many times. He'd been to the doctor in Cowansville so many times it was just boring. Boring. Same questions. No answers.

What, something new hurt? Some achy pain throbbin' somewheres in his creaky architecture? He did know it was coming. Yeah, it was coming, like those squirrels. They were rallying. One day he wouldn't be able to thump his cane on the porch. One day he wouldn't be able to suck the air into his lungs or move by himself.

His eyes got hot and his lids shook. He smiled a mercy smile. He wasn't even hungry and the sandwich sat there, its Abercorn bakery bread hardening in the breeze. But he wouldn't let them have it. He would protect that sandwich with all the vinegar that was left him. He looked at his hands. Fat, wrinkled chicken's feet or something. He'd gutted a lot of chickens at the slaughter house in Farnham before getting the job at Edward's feed store where he would count out new chicks and fill the orders. So many they couldn't be counted. Death seemed everywhere. In the bushes. In the eyes of the squirrels. In the sun that sat on a fixture in the sky as he spun out his memories.

"Frig," he said. He felt a presence near him then. He was too tired now to be startled. He tried to lift his stick but fell asleep instead.

When he woke the first thing he felt was a breeze cooling beads of sweat on his wispy forehead. The sun was lower in the sky. The plate with the sandwich was gone. He felt hungry and he tapped his stick on the porch. He noticed the kids playing on the edge of the oak trees where the old tire hung from a fraying rope.

Deming Cemetery, St. Armand

Frank Willdig

Here are the hills
and the heavy greens of
August.

The rivers wind,
the clouds billow

and the sun glides
glad and golden
toward the west

and over the family graveyard;

its iron gate faces
the Pinnacle to the south;

like a Friedrich painting,

and tucked away
into fading stone
is the family name,

memories emerge
from a handful of dust

and an ancestral silence
from the unencumbered dead.

**Unintended Monument to
Those Who Cleared the Land**



Anne F. Holloway

Driving by Mt. Orford

Frank Willdig

Steadfast and constant against a blue sky,
and catching a ribbon of snow-white cloud,
that gleams in sunlight as we amble by,
before we drive back to the urban crowd.

This eternal titan, king of the east,
born of the chaos in magma and flame,
older than the days of man, tree and beast,
surveys a landscape now verdant and tame.

It's easy to see when the skies are clear
peace and prosperity under its sight;
ancient as the northern lights that appear
throughout our twenty-first-century night.

This landscape graced by the sight of its dome
signifies to us with a soundless voice
that here stands emblem of our Townships home,
the land of our birth and land of our choice.

The Beauty of the Townships

Kathleen Lynch

I was almost overwhelmed one day by the sheer beauty of autumn in the Eastern Townships. A friend of mine from Trenton, Ontario (who grew up near Danville) took me for a drive down through Kingsley, around Dennison Mills and back on the highway to Richmond. The trees were dressed in their very best reds, yellows and oranges. At times the view almost took my breath away! How fortunate we are to live in such picturesque surroundings. We often hear people say how drab November is but if we try to imagine the scenery as charcoal sketches, it doesn't seem so dreary. December is usually brighter with fresh snow on the trees, atop fences posts, and like white frosting on rooftops. Spring is when things start greening up and come awake after a long winter. Soon crocuses, daffodils and tulips add brightness, and summer comes with leaves, flowers and gardens in bloom.

Clearly, we live in an artist's paradise!

Our Roots

Rebecca Taylor

Like the roots of a tree, human roots connect us to the soil they come from. We come from different places but we are planted in the earth we stand on. For me, my roots stretch to many countries around the world, including Armenia, England, Scotland and Ireland. Each group of my ancestors came to Canada for different reasons and ended up in the Eastern Townships; however, one thing is the same for all of them—they came with the hope of starting a new life here. They faced difficulties and joys in creating their new homes, but, like the trees, they learned to face the changes that occurred in life. For a tree, this means the changing of the seasons and changes in their leaves; facing the cold and warm temperatures, the snow, ice and wind. In the end, however, the tree remains standing firm and tall, although sometimes, it might sustain a few injuries. Consider a tree's branches like a human's bones. The tree, like the human, if well cared for, will feel its bones heal and flourish again. Trees also live with their neighbours, in one forest. In that forest, there can be many types of trees drinking the same water, standing under the same sky and soaking up the same sunshine. This is also true of people who are around us: they all have different personalities and backgrounds, but they all require the same components—shelter, food and clothing—to survive.

Let us go forward considering this as we walk through our towns and cities: that we all live in a “human forest,” and even though we might not always agree with each other and we come from different places, we can still treat each other with fairness and kindness. Even though our roots stretch out in different directions, they are all anchoring us to the same earth.

Laverne Aitchison's ancestors were Scottish immigrants who settled the area around Granby and Sherbrooke, Quebec. Laverne is the editor of the Eastern Townships of Quebec Connector ETQC since 2008.

Janet Chandler Allingham spent the summers of her childhood on the shores of Lake Memphremagog. She studied nursing at McGill, and completed an MA in Applied Language Studies at Carleton University. She has tutored at the Cowansville Institution, and currently contributes to *The Wrench*, a community newspaper for homeless people.

Christine Aspinall: Retired medical secretary. Mum of 3 sons and grandmother of three grandchildren. Interests are environmental and conservation issues, animal welfare, archaeology, and ancient history. Home town is Richmond.

The Beaulne Museum occupies the Château Norton, built by Arthur-Osmore Norton who made his fortune by manufacturing a jack for the railway industry. The Museum's essay in this book explores the history of the Norton family and the beautiful Château located in Coaticook, Quebec.

Thomas Bilodeau has lived in the Eastern Townships since 1997, and is a graduate of Bishop's University. Lennoxville is his favourite town in the region.

Harvey Catchpaw was born in 1933 and still resides in Magog's Cherry River. His love of nature stems from his teenage years working outside on the farm and in the woods.

Winston Fraser was raised on a family farm in Cookshire as the fifth of twelve siblings. He is an accomplished photographer and writer. Among his photographic credits are National Geographic Society ("Canada Travel Guide") and *Encyclopedia Britannica*. He has published four books, including *Historic Sites of Canada*.

Yann Geoffroy is a writer and musician from Dunham, Quebec. He is currently living in Montreal, teaching English literature at LaSalle College.

Anne F. Holloway studied History and Creative Writing at Concordia University. Her stories have appeared in *Taproot*.

Haydn Juby currently studies English literature and Secondary Education at Bishop's University. Passionate about reading and writing, he enjoys little more than a good book. His love of literature has earned him a membership in the Golden Key Honour Society.

Janice LaDuke (aka Gramma Janice) has lived in the Townships since 1977. She is a purveyor of old books, a singer of songs, and a baker of bread. She writes when she can.

Kathleen Lynch is a retired caregiver who worked 31 years at the Wales Home. She enjoys writing, particularly about family history.

Colin MacGregor is a Yamaska Literacy Council tutor/trainer. He teaches in prison where he has resided since late 1991. The scion of a Cowansville business family, Colin graduated from McGill and Carleton, and presently edits *The Social Eyes* magazine. He won the 2012 CIDI Chawkers Foundation playwriting competition with "A Summer Student Abroad," and has been published in *Taproot*.

Danny McAuley is the co-owner of Brome Lake Books with his wife Lucy Hoblyn. A father of three sons, Danny is a graduate of Mount Allison University and worked for many years in professional theatre.

Donna Magwood: Grandmother, nature-lover, and folk history fan. Baby-boomer whose roots and heart have always been in the Townships. Born in Montreal, raised in Chambly, currently living in Knowlton.

Don Martin grew up in the Townships and presently lives in Melbourne, Ontario. He is a founding member of Townshippers' Association.

Denis Palmer was born in Montreal in 1948, and has lived in and around Sawyerville since 1979. He draws and paints in watercolour, mainly local subjects, the common things done by friends and neighbours that depict the passage of everyday lives.

Bernice Sorge has lived in Dunham, Quebec, since 1976. It was here that her three sons were born and where she started her artistic career. Over the years, she has founded several cultural non-profit organizations including her own studio where she teaches and introduces artists to printmaking. She is a painter, writer, and art therapist.

Susanne Speidel was born in Quebec, in 1978, to German immigrant parents, and is a self-declared bookworm who reads in German, English, and French. She is also a lover of nature's wordless languages, which she translates with coloured pencil on paper. Visit www.susannespeidel.com for examples of her botanical drawings.

Elsie Sullivan was founder and director of the Marsil Museum in Saint-Lambert, Quebec. Her writing has previously appeared in the *Stanstead Historical Society Journal*.

Rebecca Taylor is an author from rural Quebec. She has loved creating stories even since before she could write them down. Her first poem was published when she was twelve years old. Since then, she has had numerous poems and short stories published in online and print publications.

Sheryl Taylor is a retired teacher who has lived full-time in Knowlton for the last seven years, and has owned property in the area for over forty years. She is passionate about reading and writing, wrote a weekly column for the Townships Sun (Brome Lake Village Voice), and is an active member of the Knowlton Literary Festival.

Victoria Vanier, originally from the Montreal area, moved to the Eastern Townships a little over thirty years ago, and has been working as a reporter for the *Stanstead Journal* since 2005.

Beverly Wilkin (née Gough) was raised in Montreal and has lived in western Canada since 1978. A passionate amateur genealogist, she enjoys researching the various branches of her family tree, including her father's family, the Goughs, longtime prominent residents of Bedford. This is her first publication.

Frank Willdig is a longtime resident of the Townships who enjoys writing poetry. He has published previously in *Taproot*.

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Thank you

Townshippers' Association

Townshippers' Association is a non-profit, non-partisan community organization that represents 46,000+ members of the English-speaking community in Quebec's historical Eastern Townships.

Founded in 1979, Townshippers' has spent more than three decades at the forefront of community engagement.

The Association's projects address heritage and culture, community development, access to health and social services, support for seniors, and youth retention. The organization's input is regularly sought at the municipal, provincial, and federal levels as well as by other stakeholders on a variety of issues affecting English-speakers in the region and across the province; our extensive knowledge base and recognized expertise is a result of the hard work and dedication of the organization's staff and team of volunteers throughout the years.

Our Mission:

- Promote the interests of the English-speaking community in the historical Eastern Townships;
- Strengthen the cultural identity of this community;
- Encourage the full participation of the English-speaking population in the community at large.

Learn more about Townshippers' at

Townshippers.org

819-566-5717

Our Stories: *The Eastern Townships Chapter in Canada's 150-year* story focuses on the influence and role that Townshippers - the English-speaking community of Quebec's historical Eastern Townships - have had on the fabric of Canada.

Through various genres and mediums, 25 contributors examine the nuances of this community's experiences, its characters, its contributions and its spirit.

The Our Stories project was launched in 2016 by Townshippers' Association to mark Canada's 150th anniversary celebrations. This book laces together some of the many stories from the Townships past, and offers a glimpse of the perspectives of today.

John Henry Gough & family, circa 1910:

John Henry Gough (standing) was the owner of Gough's Harness Shop, a business he inherited from his father. Founded in 1837, the shop was a prominent fixture of Bedford, Quebec, for many decades. In this photo, John is joined by his eldest son John Henry (junior), his younger son Frank Leslie, and his wife Flora Azubah Gough (née Vaughan).

