

THE GEORGEVILLE ENTERPRISE

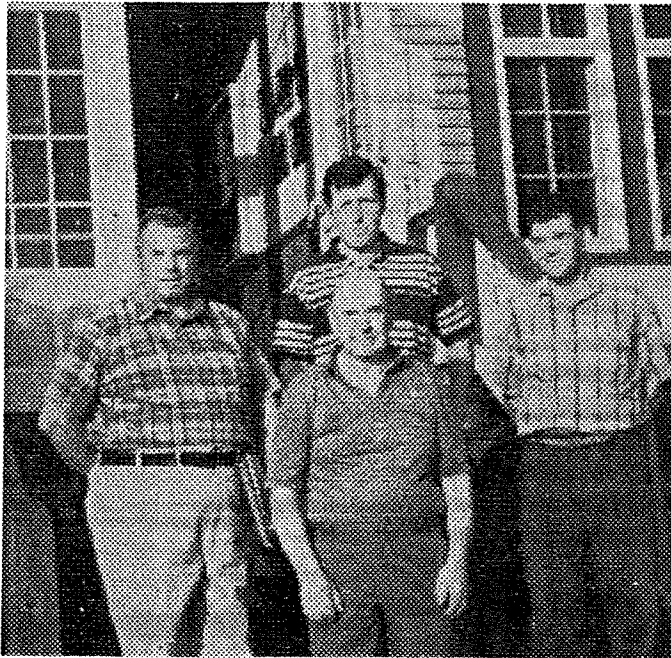
Vol 5 No 1

AN OCCASIONAL PUBLICATION OF

SUMMER 1996

Société d'histoire de Georgeville / Georgeville Historical Society

BICENTENNIAL FUND BUILDS ON TRADITION TO LEAVE VILLAGE A LASTING BENEFIT



Four Community Association presidents: Dick Hornby (left), Richard Camber (top), John Cochrane (bottom), and Wayne McTavish (right).

MASTER BUILDERS OF A 'BELLE ÉPOQUE'

The 1880s and '90s were in many ways Georgeville's "belle époque." The village enjoyed a new prosperity as the spreading network of railway lines brought summer visitors from Montreal, Boston and New York to the lake.

This will be the focus of the GHS/SHG's 5th annual meeting and exhibition in the Murray Memorial Centre at 2:30 p.m. on Saturday, July 6. Guest speaker Lorne MacPherson will tell the story of the MacPherson family's role in the development of the village, including the work of two master builders of the era: Charles A.K. MacPherson, who built the new Camperdown Hotel in 1884, and Charles' brother-in-law, Nathan Allan Beach, who built the rival Elephantis Hotel in 1893. The exhibition will continue until Friday, July 12, and will be open daily from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

As preparations to celebrate the bicentennial of Georgeville's settlement in 1797 gather momentum, the Community Association of Georgeville has launched a major fund-raising campaign to renovate the Murray Memorial Centre as the village's main bicentennial project.

"The bicentennial gives us all an opportunity to come together and make a lasting contribution to our community, for the benefit of this and future generations." Toby Rochester, chairman of the campaign committee, said in announcing the campaign.

Plans for the renovations, based on a careful study of the 62-year-old building, were approved after two well-attended special meetings of the Community Association in April and May. The renovations are designed to preserve the character and appearance of the community hall, while ensuring that the building will continue to serve the community well into the 21st century.

The plans include a new deck and front steps to provide a safer, more convenient and attractive main entrance. A 28.5 ft. by 13 ft. rear extension will add essential fire exits from the main floor and basement. Other improvements include urgently-needed repairs to the foundation of the building and conversion of the basement fire hall to a versatile, independently-heated recreation-meeting room for summer and winter activities.

With two generous private donations of \$10,000 each already pledged, the target for the Bicentennial Building Fund is \$160,000. "This is an enormous challenge," Rochester said. "We know that, with a thoughtful and generous response from the entire community, the full objective can be reached."

A Building Committee chaired by Community Association President Richie Camber and including Dick Hornby and Wayne McTavish, the two immediate past presidents of the Community Association, will be in charge of the renovations. The work will proceed only to the extent that funds are available and will begin immediately after Labour Day so that the renovations can be completed in time for

the bicentennial.

Contributions are tax deductible and donors' names will be recorded on a Bicentennial Donors' Scroll in the hall.

The bicentennial project builds on a long tradition of community-minded endeavour exemplified at the turn of the century when villagers and summer residents came together to acquire the village green (see following story).

The tradition gathered strength in 1934 when William A. Murray gave a 2.67-acre site in the centre of the village to the School Commissioners of Stanstead Township for a new consolidated school—the site where pioneer homesteader Richard Holland built the first wayfarers' inn on Lake Memphremagog before the War of 1812-15. (The inn later became Abraham Channel's Tavern Stand and, when Thomas McDuff bought it in 1861, the Camperdown Hotel).

The new school was "grandly opened," as the *Stanstead Journal* put it, in 1935 with more than 60 students in grades one to nine. As a "consolidated" school, it replaced one-room schools on the Magoon Point and Merrill roads as well as the two-room school in the village. This cleared the way for Georgeville's old red school house, which had served as the village school since 1849, to become the village's first community hall.

In the 1920s and early '30s, the village's Community Club, a forerunner of today's Community Association, mounted theatricals and socials in McGowan's Hall or the Odd Fellows' Hall (both now gone). Despite the severe impact of the Great Depression, summer resident Miles Williams managed to raise funds to buy the old school from the School

Commissioners in the name of "the Georgeville Social Community Hall Association."

Dr. W.P. Percival, the director of Protestant education in the province, made clear at the opening of the new school that he was not sorry to see the old one go. On inspection visits, he had pronounced himself pleased with the level of instruction, but repeatedly inveighed against the local school commissioners for leaving the school's basement in a condition he likened to "the Black Hole of Calcutta."

That appraisal did not discourage the community. As the *Journal* reported in March 1935: "Considerable enthusiasm is shown by the people here raising funds for remodelling and making the old school building into a community hall." The remodelling included the removal of a partition between the two classrooms, a new entrance, a kitchen and a stage for dramas like "Aunt Tillie Goes to Town," and "Aunt Tillie Goes to Sea." The names of the cast of one such production survives, inscribed on a cupboard door: Adelaide Atkin as "Jinx," Bernard Drew as "Stewart," Lloyd McTavish as "Mervin Tucker" and Nelson Partington as "Luther Lorimer."

In August 1945, with Georgeville's veterans home from service in the Second World War, the Georgeville Community Association was formed to administer the property of the community, including the old school house and the village green. However, it was not until 1960, when today's association was incorporated, that title to the properties was vested in the Community Association.

Since then, under the leadership of presidents James A. Davidson (1960-62 and 1969-70), John A. Cochrane (1962-69), George C. ("Jack") Atkin (1970-79), Dick Hornby (1979 to 1987), Wayne McTavish (1988-90) and Richie Camber (1991-), the association and its volunteer directors have worked to promote, in the words of its charter, "the recreational, cultural and general well-being" of the Georgeville community.

In 1966, after the the school commissioners decided to close the village school and bus its pupils to Magog, the building was transferred to the Community Association with the agreement of the Murray family. Since then the association has moved to fulfill its broad mandate, helping to organize the volunteer fire department (1970), sponsoring the children's recreation program and Canada Day celebrations, housing the Sydney Steele Memorial Library, and making possible a wide range of activities from the annual book sale to the Georgeville Review to the summer art festival.

The bicentennial project is intended to ensure that the Murray Memorial Centre will continue to serve as the vital centre of community activity as Georgeville's enters its third century.

SPECIAL DISTRIBUTION OF THE ENTERPRISE

This issue of *The Enterprise* is being mailed not just to members of the SHG/GHS, but to a wide list of more than 700 present and former members of the Georgeville community. We felt a wider readership would be interested in news of the village's bicentennial preparations and might wish to support the Community Association's bicentennial project. Contributions may be sent to the Bicentennial Building Fund, P.O. Box 1-8, Georgeville, QC J0B 1T0.

The historical society would welcome any readers who would like to join the society and receive future issues of *The Enterprise*. A membership form is enclosed with this issue.

A RESILIENT COMMUNITY PULLED TOGETHER TO CREATE THE VILLAGE COMMON

In 1903, Edward Goff Penny, the former Liberal Member of Parliament from Montreal who summered at his estate "Fairwater" on the northern flank of the village, wrote to W.A. Murray, the master of "Dunkeld" on the southern flank. He set out a proposal which would leave later generations in the village greatly in his debt.

315 Peel Street
Montreal

My dear Murray,

I am taking the liberty of approaching you on a subject which seems to me of interest to all owning property in Georgeville.

There is movement on foot to purchase the piece of property belonging to the late Mr. Fairbairn opposite Dr. Keyes and Bullock's shops and throwing it open as a park.

This can now be bought for \$200. I am subscribing \$25.00 and believe several others have promised the same. It is hoped eventually to get the whole block from Ives to the Lake taken in for a park, but as this piece is being sold to close the [Fairbairn] estate, it is thought a good thing to get possession and see how it will work.

The property in question, between Dr. William Keyes' boarding house on the south road to the lake and A.W. ("Bertie") Bullock's General Store (now Les Amis de Georges) on the north road, had come on the market. Village contractor James E. Davidson and William McGowan, Jr., the proprietor of the popular summer boarding house, "Cedar Cliffs", were prime movers in the scheme to acquire it for the community. E. Goff Penny, (who earlier had given the village its first gas street lights), moved quickly to lend his support.

Looking back, the timing of the proposal was significant. It testified to the resilience of a community determined to pick itself up from its devastating losses just a few years earlier when the new Camperdown and Elephantis hotels and a half-dozen other structures in the centre of the village were destroyed in the Great Fire of 1898.

In November 1903, with funds raised by Penny and other residents, Davidson bought the Fairbairn property for \$200 in his own name. At the same time, retired storekeeper John Taylor fell in with the

plan. He offered to throw in his adjoining lot for another \$200, expanding the common to W.N. Ives store (today the Georgeville General Store). As for Penny's tantalizing suggestion that the promoters hoped to extend the park to the lake by taking in some or all of the McGowan house property, no records survive to tell us why this foundered.

Penny's fund-raising produced a liberal response. On December 13 the *Stanstead Journal* was able to report that "through the instrumentality of Wm. McGowan and James Davidson," subscriptions to a purchase fund had "enabled the two above-named gentlemen to buy the Taylor strip of land and the Fairbairn property.

"These two strips of land are to be used as a public common and will be beautified by our village people. The ladies will be the most prominent helpers in the way of socials for the benefit thereof. As a public park in our village has been a long-felt want, we trust our citizens will appreciate every endeavour to advance the move."

With land for the park amounting to 1.1 acres now in hand, there remained the task of setting up an organization to own and administer the property on behalf of the community. In April 1904, according to the *Journal*, "a meeting of those interested in the new park" appointed J.E. Davidson, summer



Designer Philip Mackenzie stands beside the Georgeville Town Crier, the most recent addition to the park.

resident Miles Williams and Ernest W. Sheldon, who managed Mr. Penny's farm, to proceed with improvements. These included removing a dilapidated house from the Fairbairn lot and levelling and seeding the park.

By the following year, the organization was put on a more formal footing. The 26 original subscribers formed "the association for a park or square in the village of Georgeville" and ownership of the two lots was transferred to Mr. Penny as trustee (see box). (If the \$400 paid for the two lots sounds modest, it should be remembered that \$2 a day was a good wage in the early 1900s, while businessmen and professionals commonly earned \$2,000 a year).

One of the first improvements to the park was a fence for deer—not, as people contending with the rampant deer population of the 1990s might imagine, to keep deer out, but to keep them in.

As many turn-of-the-century photos show, land in and around the village was then so extensively cleared of forest growth that deer were a fairly exotic sight. As the *Journal* reported in October 1909, "Douglas McGowan was fortunate enough to secure a live deer and there is some talk of purchasing others and placing them with it at one end of our village park property."

"COPP'S LEGACY" WILL PROFILE VILLAGE FAMILIES

Plans are moving ahead to publish "Copp's Legacy: A Family History of Georgeville/Héritage de Moses Copp: l'histoire familiale de Georgeville" in 1997.

The bicentennial year book committee, chaired by David Cox, is developing an overall format and design of the book to estimate production costs and, thus, pricing. The project is intended to be self-sustaining.

It is provisionally estimated that the project will be financed by charging \$60 per page for family histories including photographs. Participants would each receive one free copy of the completed book while additional copies would sell for \$30 each.

The year-book is intended to provide families and individuals with an opportunity to celebrate the bicentennial by describing their roots in or their connection to Georgeville, whether they are relatively new arrivals or fifth generation families.

Full details of the proposed book and how to participate will be contained in a mailing scheduled for early July.

As John Boynton reported in 1995's *Heart of a Village*, in 1911 "there were three deer on the village common, one of them captured by Erwin Camber that fall, but two years later there was only one. Elinor Leney recalls that the storekeeper, Bertie Bullock, saddled with the feed bill, was generally supposed to have arranged the escape of the last deer from the park."

Later improvements have been more enduring. In 1924, the Community Club—forerunner of today's Community Association—erected the cenotaph in the north east corner of the park in memory of eight Georgeville men who lost their lives in the First World War. In the early 1930s, the Georgeville Sports Club built the first skating rink in the green on the site of today's tennis court—in later years the home of the "Georgeville Camperdowners" hockey team (for Dick Hornby's recollection of the "Camperdowners," see page 6).

Fred McGowan laid out the first rough-and-ready tennis court in the mid 1930s (the site served tennis players in summer and skaters in winter until after the Second World War.) The court, long celebrated for its "Georgeville bounce", has been much improved thanks to a new surface and fencing donated by Anthony and Julia Ormsby in memory of Jean Routledge.

The latest addition to the park meets a long-felt need: a New England-style Town Crier, which carries news of community-wide interest. Designed by Philip Mackenzie, and incorporating his fine relief carving of the steamer *Lady of the Lake*, the Town Crier evokes the New England heritage of Georgeville's first settlers. The Town Crier was donated by the Leslie family in honour of Eric Leslie, who will celebrate his 101st birthday on July 11, and in memory of his wife, Florence, both of whom were long active in community affairs.

The ownership of the village green remained in trust until 1960, when it was transferred to the modern Community Association of Georgeville, which was incorporated in that year by J.E. Davidson's son, James Arlington Davidson, Howard Bachelder, John Gibson Cochrane, John A. Cochrane, Max Grainger, Alton G. Keet, Henry McGowan, Lloyd McTavish and Charles Partington. Another member of that group was Douglas V. Lindsay, the last survivor of the original members of the village park association.

On summer days, when the park comes alive with the sounds of the children enrolled in the Community Association's recreation program and when strollers enjoy its green space in the still of the evening, the village has ample reason—in the *Journal's* words of 1903—"to appreciate every endeavour" that made it possible.

THE 26 FOUNDERS OF THE VILLAGE PARK

The 26 villagers and summer residents who came together to found "the association for a park or square in the village of Georgeville" are listed in the deeds for the property. As Georgeville prepares for its bicentennial, their names form a special honour roll in the history of the community. The group of 26:

- Rev. Samuel June Barrows, Boston clergyman, editor and social reformer who established "Birchbay" camp in 1889 and "Cedar Lodge" in 1899.
- Nathan A. Beach, the village's busiest contractor before the turn of the century who built Georgeville's Elephantis Hotel and the Haskell Opera House in Stanstead.
- Alfred Wales ("Bertie") Bullock, a great-grandson of the pioneer settler William Bullock. He opened "Bullock's Department Store" in his father's boat-building shop and (in 1897) was editor of the original *Georgeville Enterprise*.
- Prof. Charles W. Colby, McGill historian and grandson of Stanstead's pioneer doctor, Moses French Colby, who bought lakeshore property at Winlock Bay in 1898.
- James Everett Davidson, house builder, municipal councillor and, among other activities, president of the Georgeville Progressive Crokinole Club.
- C. Handyside, a regular summer guest at "Cedar Cliffs".
- Oliver Hutchins, the village butcher who also carried the mail from Smith's Mills (Tomifobia) to Georgeville.
- Douglas V. Lindsay, a long-time member of the community whose father, Robert A. Lindsay, the chief accountant of Bank of Montreal, acquired "Woodlands" in 1873.
- William McGowan, Jr., like his father before him, a Georgeville-based customs officer for 20 years and owner of the boarding house "Cedar Cliffs".
- Henry J. Mudge, a Montreal insurance executive who occupied the "Wigwam" cottage near the Georgeville wharf formerly owned by his father-in-law Thomas McDuff, the late owner of the old Camperdown hotel.
- John B. Pearse, retired general manager of the South Boston Iron Company who built a summer home at what is now Glen Harbour.
- E. Goff Penny, a Montreal customs broker and M.P. for St. Lawrence (1890-1900) who built the steamer *Anthemis* in 1910.
- William Henry Rediker, a village butcher, blacksmith and carriage maker who also spent 23 years as a customs officer, many aboard the *Anthemis*.
- Harold M. Redpath, of the Redpath sugar family, a lakeshore resident whose Stanley Steamer automobile terrorized horses on the Magog road.
- Edythe Maude Routledge, a daughter of Sir Hugh Allan who spent most of her life on the family estate, "Belmere."
- E.S. Sanford, a summer resident from South Orange, N.J., who, like Harold Redpath, arrived in the village in an early Stanley Steamer.
- Ernest W. Sheldon, a caretaker of the Owl's Head Hotel (formerly the Mountain House) who came to Georgeville as farmer for E. Goff Penny and later owned and operated "Ellabank" (now the Auberge).
- Nora Sheriff, a daughter of the Camperdown's Thomas McDuff who married an Alabama lumber merchant and built "Bonhard" (now the Lambert house) in 1909.
- Rev. F.G. Vial, the pastor of St. George's Church from 1901 to 1906.
- Miles L. Williams, a Montreal engineer who in the 1930s helped to acquire the old red school house as Georgeville's first Community Hall.

There were six others in the group — C.H. Bogue, Renfrew Canford, C.E. Davis, Ernest Mark, E.C. Perkins and L.F. Welch — whom we cannot identify. The *Enterprise* would appreciate hearing from any readers who can.

WITH OYSTER STEW AND HEAVY LUMBER THE BOYS OF WINTER TOOK ON THE WORLD

By Dick Hornby

During the early forties some of us kids were itching to skate and play hockey. But, with most of the young men away in the armed forces, the skating rink had closed down.

We decided to resurrect the old rink in front of Max Grainger's store on the present site of the tennis court. Our water supply was mainly provided by a long garden hose that snaked through the store, across the North Street and to the far end of the rink which bordered on South Street. The water supply was gravity fed, providing very low pressure at the end of the hose.

Building ice on the rink was a miserably slow process. It was accomplished by wetting down a patch of snow and stomping it into ice, a square foot or so at a time. However, the system made an excellent base and time was something we all had lots of in those days. We were inspired by the vision of wearing the maroon and white sweaters of the "Georgeville Camperdowners".

The sweaters were purchased (and aptly named) by the Georgeville Sports Club, which took over operations after two fund-raising attempts by the kids. In later years, as it had in the pre-war years, the Sports Club put on Oyster Stew suppers at Gracie Heath's boarding house, where four or five bowls of oyster stew for the price of a ticket was not uncommon. Charlie Partington was always front and centre in organizing these events, serving the crowd with huge bowls of stew.

When the young men returned home at the end of the Second World War, we gelled into a respectable hockey team. We played the local towns like Fitch Bay, Beebe, Austin and Ayer's Cliff and managed to win our fair share of games. Notable encounters included a match in the old Montreal Forum against the "CFCF No-Stars" (Gordie Sinclair and Company) and another with a formidable Bell Canada team from Sherbrooke.

For games with teams of this calibre, we generally "beefed up" our crew with a couple of capable friends from Magog - "Butch" Bouchard (no kin to the Canadiens' defenceman) and Albert "Cot" Cotterell were two of our more regular ringers—oops, wingers.



Some of the Georgeville Camperdowners: 1950-51. Top Row (left to right) Jimmy Thayer, Danny Hornby, Richard Batchelder, Arthur Evans, Bob Evans, Hubert Dustin, Henry McGowan. Bottom Row: Dick Hornby, Lloyd McTavish, Percy Camber, John Cochrane, Bill Hutchins. Foreground: Team mascot: Wayne McTavish.

The rink was maintained by volunteer labour (mostly the hockey players). It was not unusual to cut lumber or pulp all day, shovel snow from the ice surface in the evening and then play in sub-zero weather. This was a typical lineup for one of our early teams:

1st Forward Line: John Cochrane, Lloyd McTavish, Bill Hutchins.

2nd Forward Line: Dick Hornby, Hubert Dustin, Arnold "Tuffy" Warner.

3rd Forward Line (known as "The Torpedo Line"): Danny Hornby, "Corky" Dezan, Jim Thayer.

Defence: Emerson "Lem" Bachelder and Neil "Shorty" McTavish; Henry "Bugs" McGowan and Gilbert "Bink" Woodard; Bernard Drew and Richard Bachelder.

Goal: Percy "Pep" Camber, William "Wild Bill" Heath.

Subs: Bobby Evans, Arthur Evans, George Hornby, Eddie Vancour

Coach: Leonard Young

Referee: Nelson Partington

Equipping ourselves was always a struggle. Bernard Drew, who broke sticks as if they were they were toothpicks, once embarked on a "build them at

home" project. He found a piece of white ash on the farm with a natural curve. No matter that he had been drying it to use as a buggy shaft. After several hours of whittling and shaving, he honed it down to something like a hockey stick.

This source appeared to be the answer to all our problems in replacing broken sticks. White Ash! Strong as steel! What a stick—didn't cost a cent! A small glitch, however, was that only Bernard had the strength to manoeuvre that piece of lumber. And all of our joys and hopes were dashed when, on his first defensive shift, Bernard attempted to block a shot

and was left with a handful of white ash splinters. An abrupt end to another promising Georgeville venture.

Alton Keet, who owned and operated the Georgeville General Store, became a saviour for the younger crowd. Alton stocked, among a myriad of other things, hockey sticks. He kept a little black book in which our names were entered recording the sticks we bought, knowing we would eventually pay him from the earnings of summer jobs. Whenever I think of those glorious days on the rink in the park, I say a silent thank you to Alton Keet.

EN 1797 GEORGEVILLE (COPP'S FERRY) N'ÉTAIT PAS ENCORE LE NOMBRIL DE L'UNIVERS

Par Bruno d'Anglejan

En 1797, Moses Copp s'installe sur le présent site de Georgeville avec sa femme et ses trois enfants pour établir, entre Austin et la rive est du lac, un traversier qui trente ans plus tard faciliterait l'établissement de la route entre Montréal et la Nouvelle-Angleterre. Antérieurement, il a participé avec plusieurs partenaires à la création du canton de Bolton, après son arrivée des Etats-Unis. Depuis l'acte constitutionnel de 1791 qui a créé le Bas-Canada, l'ouverture des cantons attire de nombreux colons américains, poussés vers le nord par la pression démographique en Nouvelle Angleterre où les bonnes terres se font rares, et par les conditions favorables offertes aux nouveaux arrivants.

C'est une vie de pionnier que Moses a choisie, dans un monde qui tourne vite. Peut-il se faire une idée, même imprécise, de l'état de ce monde, comme nous aimons le faire pour le nôtre? Jusqu'où vont les perceptions qu'il en a, des rives de ce lac clôturé de collines, parmi ces terres clairessemées de campements Abénakis? Certaines rumeurs, quelques pages de gazettes, soit de Boston soit de Montréal, circulent parfois avec les voyageurs qu'il transporte d'un bord à l'autre. Il faut du temps avant que ces potins se transforment en nouvelles sûres, celles qui font l'histoire. A l'observer guidant sa barque jour après jour, et pour mieux le comprendre, nous souhaiterions nous offrir en son nom une vue d'ensemble de ce qui se passe dans sa fin de siècle.

Comme les vagues que laisse son sillage, ce qu'il en perçoit s'ordonne en cercles qui s'atténuent vite avec la distance. Du côté de Québec et de Montréal, il est, bien sûr, familier avec l'essentiel du régime politique qui régit les cantons: le gouverneur et son conseil exécutif, étroitement contrôlés par le Parlement de Londres et le gouvernement de Will-

iam Pitt II; en face, et parfois contre, une assemblée largement composée de canadiens, certains, dit-on, conquis aux idées républicaines de la France révolutionnaire.

De l'autre côté de la frontière, en cette année 1797, c'est un nouvel attelage présidentiel qui, à Philadelphie, prend les rênes du gouvernement de l'Union, maintenant constituée de 16 états, qui se chamaillent fréquemment. L'austère et dur John Adams a remplacé à la présidence Georges Washington, qui, à 65 ans, a terminé son deuxième mandat. C'est le grand Thomas Jefferson qui succède à Adams au poste de vice-président. Les élections présidentielles de novembre 96 ont été serrées: 71 voix pour Adams contre 68 pour l'ancien secrétaire d'état. Deux hommes, deux couleurs politiques qui s'affrontent: un fédéraliste démocrate au côté d'un président centraliste (républicain). L'activité économique est intense partout; bois, fourrures, pêcheries etc.. dans les états du nord; coton, tabac, esclaves... dans les états du sud. Les armateurs américains se lancent dans le commerce des épices; au cours de l'année, le capitaine Jonathan Carnes est rentré à Salem, Mass., avec un gros chargement de poivre de Sumatra. Au sud de Copp's Ferry, le Vermont, qui a rejoint l'Union il y a six ans après avoir tenté sa chance comme république indépendante, se peuple vite: plus de 100,000 habitants entre la vallée de la Connecticut et les berges du lac Champlain. L'université du Vermont à Burlington ouvre ses portes cette année.

A cette époque, l'ouest canadien n'est plus terra incognita. Dans les cinq dernières années, Alexander Mackenzie a atteint la côte nord Pacifique, tandis que George Vancouver a exploré les recoins de l'île qui porte son nom. Mais malgré l'audacieuse percée

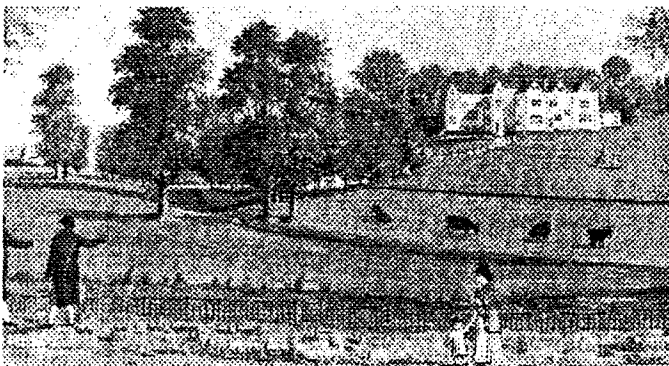
de Samuel Hearne vers l'océan arctique il y a plus de vingt ans et les efforts de la Cie de la Baie d'Hudson, le passage du nord-ouest demeure introuvé. Autour de la Baie d'Hudson et à l'intérieur des terres, c'est la guerre des fourrures entre la compagnie anglaise et la Cie du Nord-Ouest formée en 1779 par des négociants de Montréal.

Moins familier, et souvent constitué de rumeurs non confirmées, qui passent de bouche en bouche et qui sont loin d'être d'intérêt immédiat pour les colons des cantons, est le monde de la vieille mère Europe, à quinze jours de navire de la côte est, dont les pays sont entraînés de s'entredéchirer.

L'Europe, en cette fin de siècle, est l'enjeu d'une vaste partie d'échecs qu'empereurs et rois s'amuse à se livrer au gré d'alliances improvisées, y engloutissant des armées entières et toutes leurs richesses. Par exemple, à l'est, la Russie et la Prusse ont en vingt ans dépecé et englouti la Pologne par petits morceaux, à coups de guerres et de traités. On vient tout juste d'apprendre qu'un des principaux joueurs de cette partie, la grande Catherine, est morte d'apoplexie à 67 ans en novembre 96, après 34 ans d'un règne tempestueux. L'empereur de Prusse Frederick Wilhelm II, avec lequel elle s'est tant disputé, meurt subitement un an plus tard ayant ruiné son pays.

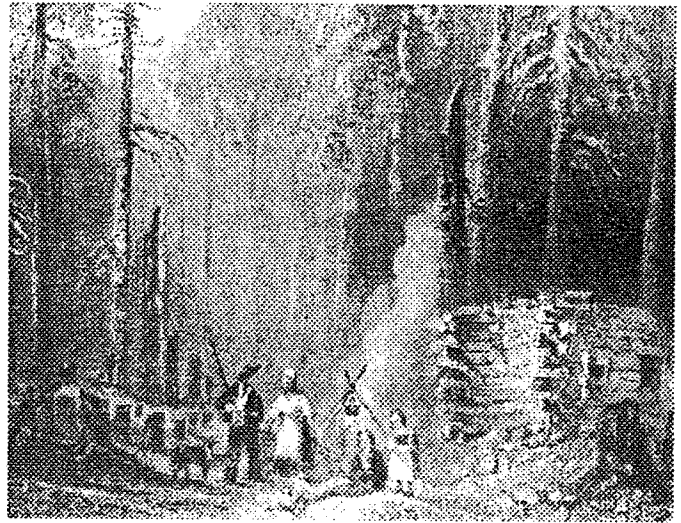
L'Angleterre, elle, est durement touchée par la disparition des ressources de ses anciennes colonies d'Amérique. Avec l'émergence de l'industrie, la misère s'installe dans ses villes. La récolte de blé de 97 a été très mauvaise, et c'est la famine. D'ici un an une épidémie de typhus va dévaster le pays. Malgré tout, aux Indes, et dans des conditions très difficiles, l'Angleterre essaie de se tailler un empire, ayant conquis le Ceylan en 96. L'Irlande est en pleine révolte; la France menace d'y débarquer. Les marins de la flotte anglaise se mutinent. Depuis 1793, la guerre contre la France, aux côtés de l'Autriche et de la Prusse, coûte cher.

Quant à la France, c'est l'épuisement. En 5 ans, le



Vue typique d'un paysage anglais en 1797

régime féodal vieux de plusieurs siècles, basé sur l'arbitraire royal et sur les privilèges, s'est effondré, avec l'exécution du roi, suivie de plusieurs projets de constitutions, d'une succession d'assemblées



"First Settlement" de W.H. Bartlett évoque la création de Georgeville par Moses Copp en 1797

nationales constituées de partisans qui s'auto-détruisent, tout cela à l'ombre sinistre de la guillotine, dans un contexte de guerre civile et de guerre extérieure contre l'Europe coalisée. Le paroxysme de l'horreur, c'est en 94 l'établissement d'une dictature sanglante sous la forme d'un Comité de Salut Public, aux ordres de Robespierre, qui institutionnalise la Terreur. Pour les citoyens libérés du joug féodal, c'est la grande détresse économique, avec un papier-monnaie (assignat) qui ne vaut plus le centième de sa valeur originale. La chute de Robespierre, et son exécution le 27 juillet 94 ont marqué la fin de cette révolution, et depuis, la France essaie de s'en sortir sous un régime dirigé par un exécutif de 5 membres, le Directoire, système dictatorial qui se maintient comme il peut par le biais de coups d'état, à droite contre les royalistes, à gauche contre les jacobins et les sans-culottes.

Comme tout ça est loin du lac paisible et des feux de camp autour des premières cabanes de Moses et ses associés. Ils sont bien trop occupés par le quotidien, la chasse, la construction des premières maisons, l'entretien des canots et des chalands, pour s'en soucier. En 1797 leur parviennent sans doute les échos lointains des faits et gestes d'un jeune patriote corse, révolutionnaire ambitieux, un nommé Bonaparte, que, l'an dernier, le Directoire a placé à la tête de ses armées d'Italie pour commander l'offensive contre l'Autriche et ses alliés. Au

Piedmont, il vole de victoire en victoire, battant autrichiens et piémontais quatre fois en dix jours. En janvier 97, c'est le triomphe de Rivoli, tandis que Mantoue, ville forte assiégée depuis huit mois, -car l'armée autrichienne s'y est réfugiée-, capitule enfin en février. En avril, les armées de Bonaparte s'avancent à moins de 100 km de Vienne! En juillet, il proclame une république cisalpine dans les états conquis du nord de l'Italie. Et finalement, en octobre, c'est le tour de table de Campo Formio avec les autrichiens vaincus, où on fait le compte des pièces gagnées, des pièces perdues sur l'échiquier. La France victorieuse s'octroie les Pays-Bas et plusieurs duchés italiens, offrant aux autrichiens comme prix de consolation une bonne partie de la république vénitienne. Voilà Venise la Sérénissime, nation vieille de 800 ans, joyau de la Méditerranée, vaste puissance commerciale au cours des siècles, qui d'un trait de plume, bascule et s'effondre. Ensuite, en janvier 98, Bonaparte ira envahir Rome, saisir les états pontificaux, et traîner jusqu'à Valence en France ce pauvre pape Pie VI qui en mourra.

Ce n'est évidemment qu'un début pour notre petit général ambitieux et impatient. A peine Bonaparte est-il revenu d'Italie, que le Directoire voudrait qu'il envahisse l'Angleterre. Mais la flotte britannique est aux aguets, et finalement, il décidera d'aller chercher fortune en Egypte, où il débarquera en juin 98, avec 40,000 soldats, savants, ingénieurs, et nous le laisserons au pied des pyramides, occupé à guerroyer contre les Mameluks.

Tout ce calendrier 97 de la grande histoire s'écrit très loin dans la poudre des canons, tandis qu'autour du lac Memphrémgog on s'affaire à la chasse au chevreuil et à l'original, on construit les premières demeures de Copp's Ferry, on organise les cantons, divisant les terres "en franc et commun socage". Pour Moses et ses collègues les exploits de Napoléon Bonaparte n'ont pas grande signification. Sinon peut-être, qu'avec le blocus de l'Europe, certaines denrées de première nécessité, entre autres le bois pour construire les navires de sa Majesté, prennent de la valeur, et les forêts des cantons commenceront bientôt à s'éclaircir.

Mais le monde n'est qu'un kaléidoscope de scènes variées et confuses constitué de plusieurs univers juxtaposés, aux antipodes du village global. Et les désastres naturels viennent s'ajouter aux conflits humains: en février 97, un tremblement de terre ravage les vice-royautés espagnoles du Pérou et de Nouvelle-Grenade dans les Andes, faisant 41,000 morts, détruisant les villes de Cuzco et de Quito.

Parmi ces drames, quelques précieuses douceurs de fin de siècle récemment apparues. Parviennent-elles jusqu'au Bas-Canada?

Dans les salons de Montréal peut-être, mais pas

du tout bien sûr dans notre village. Ce sont entre autres: les "Bristol milk" et les "Bristol cream" sherries commercialisés cette année à Londres par John Harvey & Sons, la cigarette cubaine roulée dans du coton, la marmelade écossaise mise en pot pour le commerce. En France, la veuve Clicquot vient d'introduire sur le marché son divin champagne. Ce sera pour d'autres temps.

Il y a bien sûr aussi cette année quelques bienfaites découvertes comme celle du vaccin contre la petite vérole par Edward Jenner en Angleterre. Et puis il y a les poètes: Robert Burns (l'encre de "My love is like a red red rose" est toute fraîche), Samuel Taylor Coleridge, qui a 26 ans, William Wordsworth, qui en a 28. Il y a des écrivains, Goethe, Madame de Staël etc., et une explosion de grande musique dans les cours d'Europe au moment même où les armées s'entretuent. Comme toujours, le meilleur voisine avec le pire, le sublime avec l'absurde.

A Pékin, un papillon se pose sur la main ridée du grand empereur Manchu Ch'ien Lung. A 85 ans, il vient d'abdiquer après un règne de 60 ans pleins de conquêtes, ayant ouvert la Chine au commerce avec l'Occident. A l'autre bout du monde, un papillon semblable atterrit sur la rame de Moses Copp. Il y a au moins une certaine symétrie sur cette planète. Dans son coin de forêt tranquille du Bas-Canada, mal informé des événements de sa fin de siècle, il poursuit courageusement sa petite entreprise paisible et utile, menant sa barque d'une rive à l'autre, au fil des jours.

THE PIONEER GARDEN

The Bigelow Pioneer garden is in its fourth summer this year. The plants are maturing, the shrubs have grown enormously and it should be a very presentable garden for the bicentennial.

All of this is due to the generous contributions of a number of people: Marie José Laurin and Nicole Ferguson, who helped to produce a bilingual pamphlet on the names and uses of the plants that will be available in the garden this summer; those who grew plants for a plant sale in May, where a small garden shop added to the interest; Andy Howick, who donated T-shirts for the shop; Tom Morrissey, who provided mulch for the garden paths; Chantal Boulé, who sold some of the garden's wares at cost in her shop; and not least Maurey Devlen, who does more than his fair share of weeding and takes an enormous interest in the garden.

With these contributions, it looks as though the garden will be self-supporting this year.

-- Katherine Mackenzie

EXPANDING THE 'OLD BURIAL GROUND'

By John Boynton

When Scottish immigrant Alexander McPherson purchased his lakeshore property in 1843, there must already have been many graves in the burial ground at the rear of the hayfield beside the road from Georgeville to Magoon's Point. Today the MacPherson Cemetery – the spelling changed in a later generation – is Georgeville's only active cemetery, and if not its oldest, probably very nearly so.

Like the Village Cemetery – sometimes called the Bullock cemetery since it is on the lot first settled by William Bullock in 1801 – the McPherson cemetery was begun by pioneer farming families who buried their dead on the land they settled, perhaps with the assistance of an itinerant preacher.

Such was the case for the Village Cemetery, where Moses and Anna Copp lie buried along with

his family plot to the south of the earliest graves, for that is where he was buried in 1879. The lots of other early lakeshore families – the McEwans and Christies, Taylors and Johnstons – are nearby.

By 1858 the boundaries of the cemetery were apparently well defined, for in that year Mr. McPherson sold to neighbours Kirby Talbot and Osmond Boynton a 10-ft. strip of land between the burial ground and the road ("bounded on the West," the deed says, "by the Old Burial Ground and running the whole width of the Burial Ground from North to South"). It appears that the two families were already in possession of the strip, for here lie Abraham Boynton, who died in 1855, and two young Talbot daughters, Jane and Mary, who died in 1856.

Alexander and later his son, Charles A.K.

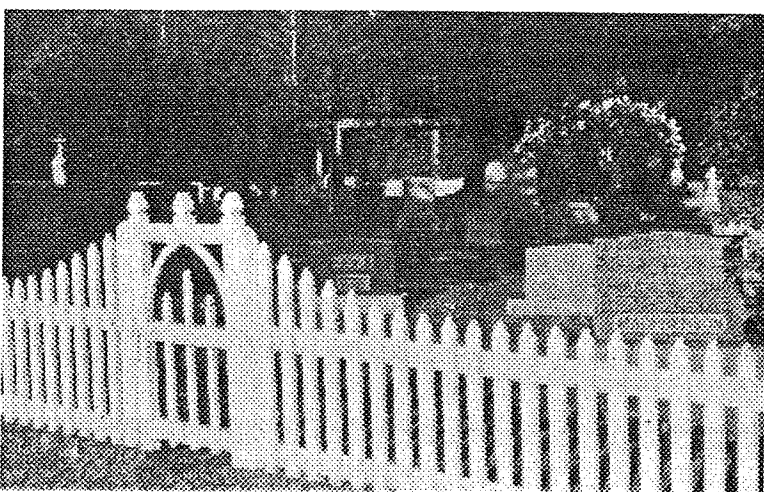
MacPherson, continued to sell burial lots until Charles died in 1942. Care of lots was the responsibility of each family and many fell into a state of neglect.

In 1948 Colin MacPherson, Alexander's grandson, gathered support in the community for a major clean up of the old cemetery. Responsibility for its care was vested in the MacPherson Cemetery Association, which was incorporated by James Routledge, Erwin R. Camber, Norman M. Evans, Linnie E. McEwan, George C. Atkin, Jane A. Boynton and Colin C. MacPherson.

Under the latter's direction, the ground was levelled, stones straightened and repaired, and a white picket

fence installed. At the same time, Colin MacPherson gave land to the new association to enlarge the cemetery by almost 250 graves, which he considered would meet the needs of the community for the next 50 years. In July 1950 the cemetery was dedicated by the Rt. Rev. Philip Carrington, the Anglican Bishop of Quebec.

Clearly Colin MacPherson did not foresee the boom that was to take place in the construction of lakeshore cottages, whose owners would come to feel themselves part of the Georgeville community and choose this peaceful ground as their last resting place. A further expansion in 1986 added space for another 90 graves. These, too, sold rapidly, and two years ago the association's directors decided to enlarge the cemetery once more, this time to the south on land again donated by the MacPherson family. This adds 230 full grave spaces, ensuring that the old burial ground will continue to meet the needs of Georgeville families.



The MacPherson Cemetery on Magoon Point Road

the Bullocks; and so, too, for a number of abandoned and overgrown family plots, like that of Richard Copp on his farm on the Chemin de l'Est (today the property of Guy and Monique Lord) and the Magoon cemetery on the Point.

In the MacPherson cemetery, the earliest graves were undoubtedly located in the northeast corner of the present cemetery. Their markers, probably made from wood or lakeshore limestone since few pioneer families could afford imported granite headstones, have long since disappeared.

The oldest surviving marker is a lead plate recording the death of David Webster on June 21, 1822, aged 58 years. He was the first known owner of what became the McPherson property. The lead plate was probably attached to a wooden marker, and was found by Colin MacPerson when the cemetery was restored and expanded in 1948.

Alexander McPherson seems to have set aside