

Heritage Renfrew

Renfrew Ontario

NEWSLETTER

November 1983

Page 1

Dear Member:

Hello again!

In the early part of the year we were hustling around gathering material for our Story of Renfrew book. It has come along satisfactorily and we thank you for your contribution to it. Carol Bennett and Don McCuaig have most of the material in their hands now, but it will take some time to sift through and prepare for the book.

There were many visitors to Bonnington House this summer. We had set it up as a Museum House, borrowing some things from the McDougall Mill Museum and some from friends. These will now be returned until next year when we hope to do some restoring to the house, and use it again.

The Plaque commemorating the life and work of A. A. Wright has been dedicated and will be placed near the office in the Renfrew Collegiate Institute. Harry Hinchley and Marge Lindsay are responsible for the completion of this project.

Edna Nighbor has introduced copies of the 1842-51 census of Horton Township. This publication was transcribed and edited by Bruce S. Elliott of Ottawa Branch Ontario Genealogical Society. The transcription of all Ontario census is a project undertaken by the O. G. S. They will be printed and made available to the public since they contain some very useful information. Additional copies may be had by contacting Edna Nighbor at 2-4581.

Next year - 1984 - is Ontario's Bicentennial and many events will be scheduled for it. Our Annual meeting in January will be a general meeting with a special speaker, probably someone who will bring information about our Ontario Heritage.

.. The first French settlement was the mission of Ste. Marie among the Hurons near Midland, and was founded in 1639. In 1784 the greatest influx of people came from the United States and were called Loyalists. The area was divided into Upper and Lower Canada and Colonel John Graves Simcoe was appointed Lieutenant Governor of Upper Canada. Of course, some of the communities in Ontario have not existed for 200 years and this is the reason the theme for the Bicentennial is - "Celebrating Together".

About 1833 a young French Canadian, Xavier Plaunt came to Renfrew to work for Joseph Mayhew. Not long after, he heard that Sgt. Henry Airth was leaving the Thos. McLean farm, which he had rented since 1828, to work his own recently purchased 200 acres at the east end of town in the vicinity of the Barnet Subdivision. The McLean farm was also 200 acres bounded by Hall and Raglan Streets. Plaunt visited McLean in Perth. He bought the farm, met and later married Thos. McLean's daughter, Jeannett. A few years later he added Joseph Mayhew's 100 acres, which meant that a large area bounded by Hall Street and Raglan Street extending to the Bonnechere River where the town now stands belonged to Xavier Plaunt.

More settlers were coming into Renfrew in the 1840-1850 period.

In 1844 William Jamieson settled on a farm in Horton on the high land overlooking the Bonnechere River. Duguld Jamieson lives on the farm today. Here, the Jamieson's set up a pioneer stone quarry and lime kiln on the ridge of limestone on the farm. The gray stone for Renfrew's Post Office came from this quarry.

Later descendants established a stone quarry and lime kiln in Renfrew on land behind St. Francis Xavier Church. Alex Jamieson provided stone for the foundations and walls for most of the houses in the vicinity from either of the two quarries. The stone from the quarry on the farm was more pliable and easily cut. When the town quarry began to run out Alex Jamieson established a bigger quarry with three lime kilns on the Second Line just beyond Thompson Hill. This quarry gave very white stone.

In 1909 the Jamiesons leased from Fred Hilliard the brickyard near the foot of Patrick St. along Smith's Creek. They also took over the Thomas Henderson brickyard along the Bonnechere River at the end of Elgin Ave. Most of the brick used in buildings in the vicinity of Bonnington House came from local brickyards.

.
Quiz: Who was the first Mayor of Renfrew? What Year?

Dorothy Skinner
President