

Lake of Bays Heritage Foundation

RUTH MARTIN PAPERS

BOOK #1: General Muskoka History

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Guide Book and Atlas of Muskoka and Parry Sound Districts

Guide Book and Atlas of Muskoka and Parry Sound Districts

Maps by John Rogers

Sketches by S. Penson

Toronto, H. R. Page and Company

Around this are various sketches of the Northern Districts

Entered according to the Act of the Parliament of Canada, in the year 1879, by H. R. Page and Company, in the office of the Minister of Agriculture

Large map of Lake Couchiching and the Lakes of Muskoka, and route via the Northern Railway of Canada, to accompany the Northern Lakes Guide.

MUSKOKA AND PARRY SOUND DISTRICTS

By
W. E. Hamilton

Introductory

The Free Grant Districts of Muskoka and Parry Sound are of deep interest to older settlers of Ontario, the provinces, the United States and Europe.

In addition to what may be called the emigrating class, an increasing multitude of tourists make Muskoka their temporary home. There are hunters, trappers and anglers, and many other travellers who visit Muskoka in ever increasing numbers. Visitors have asked for descriptive maps of Muskoka to guide us, before we start for the north and to retain as a souvenir of our journey". Mr. W. E. Hamilton, an emigration agent in Bracebridge reports a continual stream of such applicants for maps, and descriptive matter in Muskoka, while the Crown Lands Agent, Mr. A. White, is similarly besieged.

The publication of the present Atlas is designed to satisfy the demands of land seekers, immigrants and tourists for a trustworthy series of maps which embrace the whole Free Grant territory. The maps have been lithographed from original drawings made by Mr. John Rogers and his assistants, who personally traversed the land and revised and corrected the Government surveys and topographical detail. The Government township maps were useless to settlers because the roads were not plotted on them. Land hunters can now map out their journey before leaving for Bracebridge, Rosseau or Parry Sound. Maps drawn by S. P. Penson documents places of interest in the district of Muskoka.

The maps were prepared with minute scrutiny in a descriptive matter, and were considered a subsidiary to the Atlas proper. One should not expect an elaborate treatise on Muskoka, which would have enormously increased the cost of the Atlas, without any proportionate boon to the public. It is hoped that the maps will interest the reader's attention, and peak interest in the sort of a country he is about to visit. All available sources of information, including the "Undeveloped Portions of Ontario", published by Kirkwood and Murphy of Toronto, have been utilized. In the composition of the work, the difficulty has been altogether out of proportion to its bulk when printed. When the author traversed ground outside his own personal knowledge, he was obliged to go over huge piles of printed matter.

Muskoka has for its principal boundaries the Bobcageon Road on the east, Georgian Bay on the west, Lake Nipissing and the French River on the north, and the Severn River on the south. Our neighbours therefore are the older settled portions of the Counties of Simcoe and Victoria, a portion of the County of Peterborough and Algoma. On the north, there seems to be no bar to our ultimate advancement, till we reach a climate too cold and in too high latitude for agriculture. It is well known that most excellent land lies on the north of Lake Nipissing. The extent, as computed from the areas of the various surveyed townships in Muskoka and Parry Sound, given in "The Undeveloped Lands of Ontario", is 5500 square miles. But, taking in unsurveyed townships and considering the ultimate territorial heritage of our people, the area of Muskoka is approximately 10,000 square miles.

Mr. J. C. Miller, compared Muskoka's territorial settlement with some of the ancient kingdoms of Europe and American states, or provinces. Aiding ourselves by a table kindly furnished by his son, (Upper Canada Collage) we see that the Free Grant Districts are, in round numbers, five times as large as either the Province of Prince Edward Island, Delaware in the United States, five times the size of Connecticut, one fifth larger than New Jersey or Massachusetts, one eleventh the size of Belgium, one sixth of the size of Holland, and one third of Denmark or Switzerland.

The comparative statistics of these old, settled countries cannot be dismissed without a glance at their respective populations, as forecasting the future of the vital density of Muskoka, and the numerical limit to which we may aspire within the sober bounds of reasonable hope taking the limiting extremes of density of population among the nations, states and provinces above cited. We find that our Free Grant Districts could sustain 460,000 people, judged by the standard of Prince Edward Island, or 4,400,000 by that of Belgium. The immediate returns from Switzerland and Denmark would suggest populations of 1,670,000 and 1,200,000 respectively.

My estimate therefore, published two years ago, in the "Undeveloped Lands of Ontario" of 100,000 souls whereof 80,000 should live by agriculture and 20,000 by manufacturing, commerce and other pursuits, as the population which we might ultimately reach, is within a safe margin of sober forecast. We are reaching that limit by gigantic strides. Fourteen years ago, a small church would have held all the people from the Severn to the Georgian Bay. Seven years later we could have filled Spurgeon's Tabernacle. Now, we outnumber the white population of British Columbia.

The quotations of experts, place the present population of these Free Grant Districts between 26,000 and 30,000. The writer leans more to the latter than the former figure. In his published estimate, two years ago, he called the population, "over 20,000". Remembering the large intervening immigration and guided by the returns of the number of electors at the recent general election, he rather leans to the number 30,000 as our present limit. The district is so rapidly filling up as to necessitate a quinquennial census. We shall not however, have long to wait for the next decennial enumeration, and in 1881 will show the Free Grant System to have been a pronounced success. Among the minor curiosities of our census may be mentioned the possession of pagan Indians, real bonafide and tolerably picturesque pagans in the Parry Sound District. As to the distribution of our people by nationalities, we are thoroughly mixed.

We have pioneers from almost every country in Europe except Turkey, the British Isles, Germany and Scandinavia. It is also hoped a fair share of Mennonites will emigrate to Muskoka. In addition, we have of course, large numbers of native Canadians, the average of five. Looking at a voters' list at random, it would now be an even bet, whether the name of a given man is Canadian or from the British Isles. We have also a sprinkling of intelligent Americans and we would like more. Within the last three years, the immigration has shown a preponderating Canadian element.

Do you want to know what sort of country Muskoka looks like? If you get a bird's eye view of the region from a balloon, soaring over the centre, you would see between the Severn River and the Georgian Bay and stretching northward to Lake Nipissing, a land of forests seamed with open spaces where the axe had let in the light of day, with large clearings, free from stumps, in its older parts and increasing inroads even in the forests of its northern fringes. From that towering height the rock would not obtrude itself strongly on the view; a peculiarity of Muskoka rock, as compared for instance with that of the three kingdoms, being the facility with which trees find a foothold in the most tiny crevices, and the rapidity with which they clothe the naked crag. But, till you soar above the region of cloudland, one great "thing of beauty" and joy to the husbandman, a countless chain of lakes would gleam here and there and everywhere, pitting the surface of the land with liquid mirrors of every conceivable shape and contortion of outline.

Muskoka is primarily lake land, more than the clear sky land, now immortalized in the pages of "all the Year Round". Some of these lakes are connected chains of navigable waters and others are isolated; while some few seem to have no outlet, nor any supply from rivers, being fed no doubt, mainly by underground springs. They vary in size, from a tiny pond, which is only a lake by courtesy, to the huge proportions of Lake Nipissing. Some, resembling Muskoka Lake, are dark from some unexplained cause, while Lake of Bays and Lake Joseph are clear and limpid. They are generally deep and almost always surrounded by a wall of dark green foliage, unbroken,

except by clearings or by the occasional intrusion of rock. The larger lakes are full of islands, Muskoka Lake being popularly said to have an island for every day of the year.

Such islands, occasionally in their turn, contain miniature lakes. A very large proportion of the islands in our front lakes (Muskoka, Rosseau and Joseph) have been bought by wealthy tourists from the "front", as places of summer residence, and on several of these charming sites handsome villas will be built – Judge Gowan of Barrie, being about to set the example on Eilean Gowan Island exceeds that indicated by the Government maps, which only show those encountered in what may be called the skeleton lines of the survey. There can hardly be less than 600 altogether, and according to the official returns, they occupy at least one tenth of the whole area of Muskoka and Parry Sound, the township of Humphrey having almost exactly one fourth of its area consisting of water, while the water area of Himsworth is only one in every 1300 acres.

Our lakes abound with fish, and their banks with game, and fur bearing animals. Even where they are not traversed by steamboats, these lakes form in many cases, a very convenient mode of transit from settlement to settlement. Innumerable varieties of nautical architecture dot our waters – dug-out canoes, clumsy and slow, but capacious to hold merchandise and uncapsizable; bark canoes, swift, graceful, and most trying to the nerves of the uninitiated; sail boats and lap-streak row boats; scows, for the carriage of hay and lumbermen's supplies; the raft of lumber, with its floating shanty, and other specimens are enumerated. One result, is that many of our Muskoka people, young and old, male and female, are good canoeists and lead an amphibious life for a large portion of the year. In the winter, when a lake has been thoroughly frozen, it forms a splendid level, and direct sleigh road from point to point, though during recent winters, owing to the ice having been pressed down by super abundant snow, before it had gained strength and thickness, these lake sleigh roads have often turned out to be only sloppy deceptions.

Another and a most important use of these lakes is to temper the climate, and very sensibly moderate the otherwise injurious effects of frost. It is easy to see that a territory flanked so largely on one boundary by the inland sea of the Georgian Bay, and having at least one tenth of its surface filled by widely distributed lakes, must be cooler in summer, and less injured by frost at all times, unless in the very depth of winter, than a country lacking lakes.

In fact, to speak popularly, the frost has extra work to do in freezing these lakes first, and thus, the arrival of the undisputed sway is delayed. Again, the moist air from so large a body of interspersed lakes prevents summer droughts, while it protects the soil very largely from the action of summer frosts, the incidence of which has not been felt seriously in Muskoka. Lastly, these lakes serve as reservoirs, to receive, and gradually give forth the tribute of violent floods, which otherwise would inundate the low lying lands and valleys adjacent to rivers carrying havoc into many a home, and sweeping the garnered grain before them, in their ruthless torrent.

The largest class of steamers which can twist in and out through the Muskoka River, from the lake of the same name, to Bracebridge. There is depth enough for the largest steamer, which the necessities of our increasing commerce can ever call for, with continual changes of direction requiring first class steering, especially for a long steamer like the "Nipissing" or the "Wenonah", the former of which can just turn round at the Bracebridge wharf on her return journey. Under the experienced pilotage, however of Mr. Cockburn's captains know every nook and corner of the river as well as I know my office pigeon holes. The action of the wash from the waves, generated by the steamers, together with the natural friction of the current, and violent abrasion in flood time, have combined to wear away the banks of the river. It is a matter of surprise, that the riparian proprietors have not long since sought a remedy by planting willows, or otherwise arresting the encroachments of the water on the river frontage. This proportion of the Muskoka River is most admirably suited for an extensive carrying trade,

The Magnetawan is navigable by steamers, but Muskoka rivers are broken by rapids or water falls. The future will see the rapids evaded by tramway portages, or the construction of locks. To us, of the present age, they say "Thus far shalt thou go, and no further". The Muskoka River, when ascended from the lake, is found to branch into two separate rivers, the South Branch and the North Branch. Each is broken by a series of unnavigable rapids. The South Branch forms the connecting link between Lake Muskoka and Lake of Bays, Trading Lake, and a whole family of small adjacent lakes and lake lets. The North Branch proceeds from the navigable chain of Mary, Fairy and Vernon Lakes.

It is hard to say where the "river" ends and the "creek" begins in the descending catalogue, and a similar difficulty besets one who would try to difference a small lake from a large pond. In fact, creeks, as we call them here, and hardly worthy of a name, would be historic rivers in Europe, sanctified by the genius of Scott, Byron, or Wordsworth, and echoing in the household speech of millions of firesides. Muskoka abounds with countless creeks, some few vanishing in the height of summer, but the vast majority, sparkling permanently and with but slightly varying volume.

The Muskoka geologically does not put its best leg foremost, to use the old proverbial advice, but, on the contrary, seems to awe the would-be agriculturalist whether he enters the territory from Parry Sound or from Washago, by showing him the upland ground floor of primeval rocks. He stands appalled, committing the traveller's error denounced by Archbishop Whately, of too hasty generalization, assuming that he sees but a prelude to an unbroken sea of rocks – his dismal wail rings out – "How can I sow or reap on these crags? Where can I even coax a scanty pasture for the hardiest sheep?"

Rocky barriers fringe the town of Bracebridge. The rock crops out at the right bank of the river, between the falls and the wharf, and elsewhere occasionally within the village limits. The level plain, beyond the intersection of Dominion and Manitoba Street, is some forty feet deep, the top soil being of all varieties, from a sandy soil to clay but vary largely consisting of a rich clay loam, eighteen inches, or two feet deep, without a stone or pebble. The same variety of soil is observable all over Muskoka. One comforting peculiarity of the Muskoka rock is its abruptly jutting nature steeply ascending from the ground, steeply descending below it. As the same rock on the lake shore dips so rapidly, that deep anchorage is afforded within immediate reach of land, so, in the soil, anchorage, rich and deep for plant roots is found so close to the rock, that splendid corn often rubs its pendent leaves against the stone wall. Many farmers have noticed that the best soil is near the rock, without knowing the reason, which is probably due to a weathering of the feldspathic portion, which yields comminuted plant food in a very available form.

The rock is also a wonderful storehouse of heat, and a reservoir of moisture in summer. It also serves to break the winds in all directions, and a building material for houses, drains, fences etc. Field stone crop up in working land which was plowed in the days of Julius Caesar. A sufficient proof of the moist nature of the Muskoka rock is given by the healthy growth of cypress and other trees which are found in swamps. Instances are common of large pine trees growing on the bare rock, and showing their huge naked roots twining around rocks and firmly wedged in some moist cleft of the crag.

It is difficult to give an average of the proportion of good land in the district, but we are not over-shooting the mark in calling it 60%, and 40% occupied by swamps and wetlands and rocky portions. Even the rocky portion is by no means absolute rock; much of it would make excellent sheep pasture. The Ontario Government, in the case of a single man, makes an additional free grant to cover the rock and swamp, so that he shall have 100 acres of cultivable land altogether.

Muskoka rock is comprised of quartz, mica and granite. Sometimes, one of these elements is found predominating or alone, and thus we have quartz seams, feldspathic rock or stones, which are almost pure mica. Gneiss rock is the most abundant in the Muskoka district, but, there are varieties of allied rocks associated with it, and, although the mineral explorations of Muskoka can hardly be said to be commenced yet, a beginning has been made, sufficient to inspire hope of future commercial returns. Gold has been found in the nugget form, though of small size, in Gravenhurst and in the Stevenson Township. A small nugget from the former locality was examined by the writer and found to be undoubtedly the royal metal in considerable purity. The discovery was made accidentally in the debris of earth from an excavated well in Gravenhurst by Mr. Neil Livingstone in the spring of 1877. This gold was sometimes imbedded in fragments of rock, and sometimes free. Gold also in the solid rock has been worked near Rosseau.

Gold bearing pyrites and some very pure samples of iron ore may also be included in the list of minerals. Iron ore samples from Stisted Township consisted of almost chemically pure iron, with a trace of manganese. An analysis of the mineral had all the appearance of plumbago, but, which turned out to be molybdenite.

Plumbago, manganese, and a host of other minerals in Muskoka rock are covered by forests. Even as to the existence at some future time of gold in paying quantities in Muskoka, nothing negative can be inferred by any but the flimsiest reasoner from the failure to find a paying gold field at Gravenhurst, by the simple process of random well-digging.

The accidental discovery of Gravenhurst gold was without a combination of capital, and scientific skill to develop the treasure. If an expert had been called in to trace the exact bed-plane and winding of the gravel where the nugget had been discovered, and to determine whether an infiltration from Gull Lake might not have caused a subterranean channel to the lower water, along the course of which channel an accumulation of the precious metal could be looked for, a very different sequel might have been ours to record to-day. None of these things seem to have been thought of. The delving and washing ended, as all such unscientific and blind-fold efforts generally end, in failure.

Many had the most absurd ideas about this gold field. They heard that gold had been found in Gravenhurst, in a certain well. They rushed out per Ministry of Natural Resources, asking peremptorily, for the visible nuggets, sternly peered into the ground with magnifying glasses, and, having found nothing yellow or glittering, voted Gravenhurst a fraud. Such simpletons from the front were seen to be thronging the Gravenhurst hotels during the gold excitement in 1877. More intelligent observers washed a panful of the gravel, found that a little heavier residuum was found in the bottom of the pan, dried it, and examined it with a magnifying glass, found no yellow grains therein, and voted the Gravenhurst Ophir a delusion.

The delusion sprang from the ignorance of these explorers as to the simplest facts and principles of gold mining. The nonappearance of visible gold, whether in nuggets or otherwise was no proof whatever of the unprofitable nature of a gold field. All that glitters is NOT gold, and some things which do not glitter, contain it, yellow mica, and iron or copper pyrites have often deceived.

Some of the richest veins, indeed, rarely show visible gold, while others which contain nuggets, are, in other respects, very poor." When we think of the millions of quartz veins intersecting the rocks of a granite country, combined with the fact that perhaps only one in a million of these is gold bearing, the wonder is not that so few gold veins are discovered, but that discoveries are ever made, more especially in a new country like Muskoka. Capital and patience are both needed. No hasty explorations will suffice. It took two years to discover the rich Wine Harbour deposit in Nova Scotia. One encouraging feature of future gold explorations in Muskoka is the aid furnished to the modern miner, by gigantic strides of chemical discovery. The chlorine process extracts gold from

ten thousand times its weight of poor materials, and, the still more important discovery of the sodium quicksilver amalgam, utilizes rejected palings of deserted claims. Poor sands and rock, which would have been scornfully rejected twenty years ago, can now be made to pay.

Passing back from gold to the baser metals, we see that the presence of iron is very marked throughout the Free Grant Districts, so much so as to puzzle surveyors occasionally by local attraction of their magnetic needles. There seems nothing to prevent the manufacture of steel ingots out of the pure iron ore, recently described by the aid of charcoal made from adjacent hardwood. Such an industry has been profitable even under the hands of Hindus and savage Maoris. The metallurgy and mineral future of Muskoka is full of hope. Without delaying to glance at the discovery of yellow ochre in Bracebridge, let us record the presence in certain localities, (the Parry Sound Road, Magnetawan and on the shores of Whitestone Lake), of limestone.

Imported rock lime is expensive by reason of the heavy freight. Limestone centres radii extend so far that the advantage in freight, practically excludes the imported article. Native limestone is crystallized at Whitestone Lake. There is smooth and beautiful rock which has all the appearance of the whitest Carrara marble, though its coarser texture is said to supersede ordinary marble. The native lime is much stronger than the imported, and will bear a far larger addition of sand.

Scenery

To the artistic eye of the traveller, Muskoka is a thing of beauty and a joy not to be forgotten.

With the exception of the lakes traversed by Mr. A. P. Cockburn's steamers, Muskoka is a virgin field for tourists. A few skirmishes may have occurred at Mary Lake or Baysville, but, to the majority, Muskoka means Pratt's Hotel at Rosseau, or Fraser's of Port Cockburn, and the adjacent islands. Many tourists never leave the deck of the steamer as she touches at the village landing place, and they see nothing of the business streets of the village itself, or the beautiful waterfalls which lie within an hour's drive of its limits. Less is known of the beautiful chain of connected waters of Mary, Fairy and Vernon Lakes. Lake of Bays, with its sinuous contortions and 78 pine-clad peninsulas was awakened for the first time, by the steamboat's whistle.

Bracebridge is eminently the natural centre for tourists who wish to see the Muskoka waterfalls with a minimum expenditure of time and money. The three largest and one smaller falls can be seen easily in one day. In the heart of the village of Bracebridge, there is a falls of 60 feet in descent. The summer tourist, standing on the bridge can see at a glance the Bracebridge Fall, and the two dark, and smooth bodies of water which precede and follow it. On one side of the bridge, the placid and unrippled water flows under a lofty and curving plateau crowned with villas and sloping down near the bridge to a little gem of green prairie, darkened by the shade of overhanging pines. Perhaps a floating leaf may aid the stranger to realize the treacherous swiftness of the current, as it approaches the upper side of the abutments of the bridge.

Turning from this glimpse of lake like placidity, let the tourist step to the south western hand rail of the bridge, and find a transformation effected, glassy stillness and gloomy darkness of water, succeeded by white, sparkling foam. Water, in every conceivable shape and contortions is sometimes thundering over some jutting crag which has defied its power from century to century, or again, striking against a hidden splinter of gneiss, and throwing up a fountain of foam and spray to sparkle in the summer sun. The gradations of colour in the water vary from the sombre and almost stygian tint of the Muskoka River in its normal state, to absolute whiteness according as it is more or less furiously pulverized by its impact on the rocky bed of the torrent.

The rocks, during a portion of the descent, show a smooth, sloping plan while elsewhere; they are irregular and shapeless crags. Everywhere, the dark and sometimes rust colours, gives a sombre setting to the succession of white foam which by the north branch of the Muskoka River at length gains the peaceful and open basin of the Bracebridge Harbour.

The summer scene is often very striking from this side of the bridge. Beyond the basin or harbour, on the left bank, lies a dark pine forest, while on the opposite side is rocky near the water's edge with sandy beaches. The blue curl of smoke wreath moves along and between the trees, tracing the course of the incoming steamer as she nears the harbour. Steamer and river are alike invisible to the gazer from the bridge, the graceful "Nipissing" disgorges her living freight at the wharf.

Butterflies, white foam and summer birds give way to snowflakes as winter progresses when the falls is eclipsed by snow-clad ice-banks. In spring, the water is at its highest, and thousands of logs come thundering over the basin, which is finally so filled, that an active man can walk across the floating floor from bank to bank. Some idea of the terrific power of the water forces itself on the spectator's mind when he sees a huge log, which a yoke of oxen could scarcely move, dashed like a feather, from rock to rock, and sometimes, split into pieces with a resistless thud of the conclusion.

High Falls is four miles past the Bracebridge Falls on the north branch of the Muskoka River. In the dry season, the falls are divided into three separate falls by two islands. It is best approached from the right bank, where the gorge can be seen in full operation, while the two other falls are insignificant images in the season of flood. The scenery through which the traveller walks, in reaching the right bank of the falls are very peculiar and rather different from that he might anticipate. Unless, just at the water's edge very little rock is visible during the ascent: on the contrary, he mounts the summit of the falls by a road cut through a vast hill of clay soil, extensive enough to supply brick clay for a large town. The tableau at the summit of the rock is quite unique.

Standing, or better still, lying on one's face and peering over a rocky parapet, one hundred feet above the basin, with the music of the gorge sounding sonorously to the left, a noble basin of water (which, from that height and distance, seems almost motionless, but which, towards the foot of the more distant falls is full of dangerous and deceitful eddies) is beneath us. Its contour bends gracefully, until it blends in the curving bank of the river, which seems like some vast silver snake in the brilliant sunlight; then, further on, down through the trees, is seen a long, and perfectly straight canal of Nature's construction, with walls of the deepest green foliage hemming it in from the sunlight. The whole country parallel to the bank of the river seems as if it had been at one time, under water, when the Muskoka River must have been a majestic and mighty torrent. Low planes and shrubbery of birch and hazel clothe the right bank of the river below the High Falls, while the opposite side is covered to the water's edge with pines and hemlocks.

But, taken all in all, perhaps the honours of monarchy must be given to the South Falls, when the rival attractions of these torrents are fairly weighed in the balance.

One specialty presented by the South Falls, (about three miles from Bracebridge on the Gravenhurst Road), is that of unexpectedness. The traveller comes on the cataract unawares. He has not just mounted a steep hill, as in his last journey. He is driving along a comparatively level road, with nothing whatever to suggest cataracts in the surrounding scenery, when, suddenly, he pulls up at the South Falls bridge, and the raging scene of boiling waters almost takes away your breath. Deafened by their thunder, dazzled by their uprising spray, confused by the suddenness of the apparition, you gladly turn to collect your thoughts, towards the upper portion of the river. You will see that this cataract differs from its rivals, in having an upper as well as a lower basin, the soil on the left upper bank having been scooped out into a small lake which boasts a little tree clad island.

Looking still higher up the river, you will see in the distance, another waterfall, which seems an incredibly tiny parent for the immense cataract behind you; and here, to calm the impatient statistician, you may say in round numbers that from the bridge to the lower basin is 1000 feet, and that the descent is 100 feet. The writer has seen the falls from the bridge in the winter, but the perfect inspection is in summer. I accepted an invitation from C.W. Molesworth to accompany him on his official visit of inspection to the Government works then, and still in progress at the falls, under the direction of Mr. Gunn. The series of rocky waterfalls, however attractive to the searcher for the picturesque, has been a grievous drawback to the lumberman, so much so, that Mr. Boyd, who had intended operating largely in square timber, was forced to give up the project, owing to the non-erection of a timber slide.

The loss to the lumbermen is twofold; first, the direct loss from the cruel bruising (often amounting to total destruction) which the logs receive in their descent to still water; secondly and perhaps chiefly, the loss arising from delay, the logs having to run the gauntlet while descending of narrow gorges, one of which is 13 and another 7 feet wide. Hence, jams are sure to ensue and a tedious process of warping them out of the jams by windlasses etc., (during which, trees growing on the tops of the rocks, come in very conveniently as fulcra, to support the strain) becomes necessary, causing a delay which may last for weeks. The work now in progress, when completed – as it is hoped, in time for next season's drive – will give lumbermen a timber slide capable of carrying logs in safety, and at a rate of more than six hundred per hour to still water.

The slide will be built along the left bank of the river, and will necessitate about four thousand cubic yards of blasting. The blasting averages eighteen feet depth of drilling per blast per day of ten hours. Mr. Molesworth is a veteran in the engineering profession and, to dispel the idea that his office is a sinecure, it may be mentioned that on the day preceding that of this inspection, he levelled over eleven miles of railway, then proceeded to Bracebridge, and on the 21st of August, 1878, travelled over three miles of the hilly and horribly rutty old road to Gravenhurst, made his inspection, and levelled over 1100 feet, traversing rough and slippery crags to slip from which would be instant death. On his return to Bracebridge, he found a telegram summoning him back to Toronto by the first train. Such a rushing work would try the nerves of one twenty years younger than this veteran engineer of over eighteen years standing in the Public Service.

A few more words on the scenic aspects of the South Falls; below the bridge, the water precipitates itself by two perpendicular leaps, followed by comparatively level basins into a gradually contracting chasm, apparently eight feet, but really thirteen or fifteen feet wide. On the right bank, a vast, almost perpendicular smooth, dark, iron-coloured rock is intercepted by lighter coloured seams, apparently mixtures of quartz, and rosy feldspathic crystals. Near the angle where one of these seams intersects the water, and cutting the former at right angles, a new glory shone over the scene on the morning of the writer's visit, a veritable rainbow, partly across the foaming and comparatively level wedge of water at the base of the secondary fall in the series. The infinite variety of rainbow tints partly hid the sombre ledges which inclined transversely to the slope of the fall, and wreaths of rainbow seemed blown by the wind across the higher parts of the rock, trickling not only from spray, but, from infiltration of surface water through the strata, out of reach of the cold, damp portion of the rock maples and birches were flourishing in front of a screen of pines. Below the last of the series which comprise the South Falls, is a basin with a background of pine forest. The geological aspect of the left bank of the river is different; crags of what resemble grey sandstone appear in company with others, dazzling the eye by their micaceous glitter.

As the writer stood spellbound by this glimpse of fairyland, amid so much stern and wrathful scenery, mentally photographing the rainbow and, be it confessed, hopeless of descending lower over the confused labyrinth of crags and tangled undergrowth, the solitude was suddenly enlivened by the sight of a grave and venerable man, whose locks showed the whitening hand of time. In fact, Mr. Sinclair, an old and respected resident of the South Falls village was seen arising and hopping with goat like agility from rock to rock. He, by his agile bounding,

comforted the writer who descended, and was pulled again up the face of a giant boulder by Mr. Sinclair, who showed him new points of view, till finally, we reached the bottom of the cascade, and, after a last upward glance at its snowing turmoil, we turned to inspect the floor of shingle, which consisted of water worn stones from the size of an egg, to that of a man's head, of all colours, and smooth – some, being actually polished.

This polishing was the laborious result of centuries of friction on the rocks, and some very remarkable round pockets or cups were seen worn in the rock by the perpetual rubbing of imprisoned pebbles. It is a curious geological speculation to explain the share which the abrading action of damp and frost, may have played in the formation of the chasm of the South Falls. It must have been very slight, or else have acted during inconceivably protracted cycles. There is nothing here as in the Niagara rock capable of being undermined or loosened, and little friable in the adamantine wall.

While dinner was in prospect, and Mr. Sinclair was carrying me off in triumph from other expectant hosts up a comparatively easy path to the village, and as we watched seven men armed with crow bars up to their middles in the water above the bridge, wrestling with an isolated boulder stubbornly imbedded in the river bed, I thought of my visit to Niagara fifteen years ago, and could not help contrasting the social surrounding of the two scenes. Here, all was quiet – no swearing, no drunkenness but much unobtrusive courtesy. The villagers did not think it necessary to gape at each tourist, or even at a journalist, as a gratuitous peep-show. There was no guide, with his monotonous droning repetition of guide book platitudes, but, on the contrary, my cicerone indicated the point of view, and then retired, knowing that we worship best before Nature's temple, in silence.

One addition to the natural charms of all Muskoka scenery is that quiet and freedom from pertinacious bores which is possible for the tourist to enjoy. We have only given our readers a glimpse of the natural beauties of Muskoka. Let them fill in the details themselves by personal inspection. They will return to the bricks and mortar of the city with renewed vigour of body, and pleasant images of the glories of Nature, be renewed in their memories during each annual Muskoka holiday.

The Sportsman

Sportsmen may be roughly divided into veterans and greenhorns. To the veterans, he has little to say. It is not for him to teach hunting or a fishing patriarch the mysteries of woodcraft or of angling. The tyro will learn more in the course of one day's journey under the guidance of our Bracebridge sporting Gamaliel, Mr. William Higgins, than he could from the pages of a library devoted to minutiae of the "Rod, Field and Gun".

One item of advice he would very strongly press on all such intending visitors to Muskoka. Write to Mr. W. Higgins, if possible, at least a fortnight before starting. He is a veteran of about 45 years standing as a hunter and angler. He knows the bush, the lake, the river, the creek, and the inhabitants thoroughly, about the ways and secret habits of the bear, deer and the pickerel. He has received honourable mention in this connection, from the pen of Mr. Hallock, author of "sportsman's Gazette", an excellent and widely known textbook.

He can also refer to Mr. Lauder, cattle breeder, Rochester, New York, and Mr. Paddock, New York. Tell Mr. Higgins what you are going to do – whether fish or hunt, and how many will compose the party, what guns, tents or dogs you possess, also whether you are pressed for time; in short, make a clear plan of your aims and requirements. He will then advise you what to get, in each particular case, and, if requested, can furnish whatever you may require, better and cheaper than you can yourselves in most cases. His general advice is to the following effect:

As for deer hunting, the north west part of Oakley is a good hunting ground and tracks of moose are occasionally seen. All around Trading Lake deer abound, and the deer hunter need not undertake any long or tiresome journey

to find his favourite quarry. The shores of Lake Muskoka are a favourite haunt for deer. If a sportsman is pressed for time, he can often enjoy deer hunting, in the close vicinity of Bracebridge, and return to the village every night. If he has a good fox hound (the best deer hound is a cross between a bull dog, and a blood hound) or any deer hound, let the dog come with him, and begin his training in company with experienced hounds.

Mr. Higgins keeps from four to six deer hounds on hand, and breeds hounds, so that there need be no failure of dogs, and if the sportsman feels so disposed, he need only bring his gun, which may be a Henry, or Ballard rifle. Mr. Higgins uses a Smith and Wesson. For one who is not accustomed to shooting with a rifle, a double barreled shot gun gauge no's 9 and 10 (for buckshot) is preferable. Sometimes, the deer dashes through the opening with such velocity, that a tyro may miss him, even at short range, whereas, the wide spreading of buckshot will almost ensure the downfall of the antlered monarch. Plenty of canoes are to be hired in Bracebridge and its vicinity. Provisions and other camping requisites can be bought in Bracebridge, under Toronto prices. One party saved 15 dollars by buying their outfit in Bracebridge.

As for fishing, Lake Muskoka is the habitat for black bass, pickerel, and salmon trout (trolling) while speckled trout are to be found of excellent quality in Trading Lake, 20 miles from Bracebridge. If the tourist prefers to buy his rods, artificial flies etc. in Toronto, he can be recommended to Croft, Colborne St. Bears may be legally shot at any time, though the skin is most valuable in the fall. Bears have been very abundant this year – 1878 – and have come into the clearings owing to the flooding of the swamps and scarcity of berries. Over forty bear skins were shipped by Mr. Beatty, from Parry Sound. The trapper can find mink, beaver, fisher marten and muskrat not far from Bracebridge. An Indian recently made a handsome sum of money by trapping for mink, muskrat and bank beaver on the south branch, four miles from Bracebridge.

The writer has undertaken the tedious task of collecting and summarizing those portions of the official reports of survey of townships which refer to fishing, and whence the following anglers and trappers, "vade mecum" is gathered.

Muskoka Lake abounds with fish – salmon trout and bass being the most valuable. The Muskoka River in Oakley abounds in large speckled trout. Trading Lake abounds in fish; speckled trout of the first description are there caught in great abundance by the Indians; the woods abound in wolves, deer, otter, mink, fisher, marten and beaver. Lake of Bays is a deep and clear lake abounding with whitefish, lake trout, and speckled trout. The lakes and streams in Humphrey abound with fish in variety – as salmon, speckled trout, pickerel, perch and bass etc.; deer, rabbits and partridge are especially plentiful.

George Kelsey has kindly supplied the writer with the following items, with reference to Whitestone Lake and the township of Hagarman:

"Around Whitestone Lake, before the country settled up, were the hunting grounds for the Indians, who killed large quantities of deer; the deer made it (the neighbourhood of the lake) their winter quarters. I went down the lake on the ice one morning and counted 55 deer. Last winter (1877 – 1878) as near as I could calculate by their fresh track across the lake, there must have been about three thousand which crossed my lot, which is the principal runway for them.

During the winter, an Indian camp was pitched at the opposite side of the road from the residence of Mr. G. Kelsey. Having reached the camp, a striking scene broke on the view. The Indian, with that exquisite instinct which seems his heritage, had pitched his tent in such a position with reference to a large, square boulder, that the camp was completely sheltered from the wind and cold.

Between the boulder and the camp, was a roaring fire; inside the camp, a quiescent Indian in a dreamy state of repose, mentally wondering perhaps why Christianity and scalping were opposed to each other, or whether the stories of Happy Hunting Grounds in Paradise were not true, after all. Deer skins were hung on poles. The meat was being prepared for transport. Dogs wandered around sniffing the deer' heads which cumbered the snow, and seemed inclined to nip our legs clandestinely, when we got out of the glare of the campfire. Next day, I saw an athletic young Indian yoked to a kind of harness, and dragging a large quantity of venison, wrapped up in a deer skin, which, itself, (with the hair so disposed as not to catch the snow) formed the vehicle of transport.

During that winter, a very deep snow, (74-75) the deer herded together in what are called "yards", and were slaughtered in the most brutal and wanton fashion, by men who shot, or knocked them down with clubs. These savages had not even the excuse of being pot hunters, for they, like the wolves, destroyed more than they could eat, and the deer, in such a plight, are too lean for food, while their skins, are not then marketable. If the deer seriously injured the farmer's crops, one could understand this senseless butchery. But what conceivable object, other than the gratifying of wanton cruelty, could be attained by exterminating these beautiful and harmless animals (which, in their season, afford wholesome and delicious meat, and which, by their presence attract large sums of money spent by tourist sportsmen), it is difficult to conceive. Many deer were also torn by stray dogs, not strong enough to kill them outright, but able to lacerate and leave them to perish in lingering agony.

History

The history of Muskoka, using this name to designate the two Free Grant territories, differs essentially from that of older settled counties in Canada. In many of the last named counties, their history is continuously traceable from the first dawn of French dominion to the present hour, and is interwoven with the general history, and historic biographies of Canada. This district, on the contrary, after coming incidentally into notice in connection with the expeditions of Champlain, seems to vanish from the ken of historians for more than two centuries, re-appearing, and beginning to assert its importance towards the middle of the present century.

The pre-historic period of Muskoka life is full of the richest material for romantic thought. We may picture the peaceful Huron, chased from his loved garden by the savage Iroquois. Swiftly he flies, but swifter is the pursuer – a foe whose are-like skull never softened yet in pity; a few brief moments, and the Huron writhes impaled, amid the jeers of the ruthless torturers by the margin, it may be, of a Muskoka lake, and breathing a dying prayer to the great, though dimly worshipped Manito.

Indian relics, both mortuary and domestic, have been discovered in the adjoining county of Simcoe, and in Muskoka the evident traces of ancient Indian gardens are on record.

Proofs of former Indian occupation of this district are abundant on the south branch of the Muskoka River, near the corner post which marks the junction of the townships of Muskoka, Draper, Oakley and McLean. A thick second growth covered the clearing formerly made by the Mohawk Indians. According to the statements of an old Indian Chief deceased some six years ago, these Mohawk pioneers of Muskoka settlement were driven away and dispersed after a succession of sanguinary engagements by another tribe of Indians who hunted and fished near Trading Lake. In Macaulay, a piece of land, some thirty five acres in extent, and perfectly clear from rock or stump was also discovered by one of the early settlers, and was the result of Indian toil. Again, in clearing the Alport farm near Bracebridge, arrow heads, tomahawks and the remains of a stone fire place were discovered, the former being of evident Indian origin, the fire place being, on the contrary, a relic of bygone whit adventurers. From the size of the trees, the relics thus unearthed beneath their roots, must have been at least a century old.

The little that Canadian history tells us of Muskoka may be briefly glanced at. In 1615-16, in the narrative of Champlain's expedition we find the following quoted in "Tuttle's Illustrated History of the Dominion of Canada":

“Always desirous to embark in any enterprise which promised to make him better acquainted with the country, Champlain laid down a plan of operations, which he offered to aid the Algonquians in carrying out, and, and at which they expressed the utmost satisfaction. He accompanied them in a long march – first up the Ottawa, and afterwards over small lakes and portages, leading to Lake Nipissing. The Nipissings, about 700 or 800 in number, who inhabited the shores of this lake, received the party in a friendly manner. Having remained with them for two days, the Algonquians resumed their journey along the course of the French River to Georgian Bay, which they crossed near the great Manitoulin Island and entered Lake Huron, which Champlain describes in his travels as a fresh water sea, two hundred leagues in length, and fifty in breadth”.

In 1639, the Hurons numbered over twenty thousand souls, according to the Jesuit census. They built villages, had mechanical skill, and were a civilized and industrious nation. For the conversion of the Hurons, the Jesuits laboured assiduously, traversing the route from the Ottawa to Lake Nipissing. “For fifteen years, (Withrow’s History of Canada) the missionaries toiled among the Hurons in the country between Lake Simcoe and Georgian Bay, at first, with little effect, but finally, with great success. Foot sore and weary, gnawed by hunger, and chilled by piercing cold, they traversed the wintry woods from plague-smitten town to town, to minister their healing simples to the victims of the loathsome small pox: to baptize, if possible, a dying child, and to tell the painted savages, in their reeking wigwams of the love of Mary and her divine son.” It may be added, that unbroken succession of Jesuit missions has been kept up since these early times, to the Georgian Bay, and to the Severn River, which Father Proulx ascended about 1860. The Manitoulin mission was organized about the beginning of the present century, and included the east shore of the Georgian Bay, and Lake Nipissing, and the French River.

To return to the Indians, the Hurons were almost exterminated by the Iroquois, and another interesting and peculiar Indian races. The Nipissings, living by the lake of the same name, were also driven away by the Iroquois, and forced to abandon their peaceful traffic in dried fish and furs. They were a branch of the Algonquins, and retained a peculiar custom of feasts for the dead, being deemed sorcerers by the French. They had received Jesuit missionaries at points along the shores of Lake Nipissing, and after their flight from that region, they joined the Iroquois and Algonquin mission at the Lake of the Two Mountains, where a remnant still exists. Before dismissing the subject of the aboriginal settlers, we remark that the Indians, have left their impress on the topographical vocabulary of the Muskoka district.

These names, always mellifluous, and suggestive are happily to some extent retained amongst us. Thus Muskoka is now widely known to the reading public of Great Britain through the medium of a tale published in “All The Year Round”, and the name is there stated to mean, “clear sky land”. This is an erroneous derivation. True it is, that the name of an Indian doctor or conjurer, who lived in Muskoka, might be so translated, but Muskoka takes its name from a greater celebrity, even the warrior “Mesqua Ukee” (not easily turned back in the day of battle). He fought side by side with the British in the war of 1812, and received the much coveted medal bearing the image of King George on its silver surface. Mesqua Ukee was head chief to the Rama Indians, and lived in Rama. What is now called Muskoka was then divided into Indian Hunting Grounds, and the south branch of the Muskoka River was the exclusive patrimony of Mesqua Ukee.

True it is that Begamagobaway (who lived in Port Carling, and whose heir is now chief of the Parry Sound Indians) ruled over a small section of the Hurons (or Ojibways) which section we might call the Muskoka Indians; but he was as the twinkling of a small star before the moon, when compared with Mesqua Ukee. The south branch of the Muskoka River, the lake and ultimately the whole district became called after the chief Mesqua Ukee. It will be easily seen how a slight corruption of the name, gave us Muskoka, instead of Mesqua Ukee, as Amerigo filched the honour of sponsorship of this continent from Columbus, so the crafty conqueror Misquedo (clear sky) has been chronicled as the godfather of Muskoka in place of the undaunted Mesqua Ukee.

Passing over the long protracted labours of Captain Bayfield, in surveying the Georgian Bay, and without pausing to chronicle the doings of the Hudson Bay, and other hunters and trappers, let us now plunge into the brief and modern history of Muskoka.

In 1858, the government commenced the building of a road from Washago to the interior of Muskoka, a road which necessarily piercing rock fastness's of forbidding aspect, disheartened many a weary traveller who jolted over its cavities and excrescences with aching bones, instead of viewing the rocks with half closed eyes from the soft medium of a railroad coach. In the latter part of 1859, the road had been opened to South Falls and the bridge was not then built. In fact the two branches of the Muskoka River formed two formidable bars to any emigrant invasion of this territory. Bracebridge did not then exist, even on paper, and an amusing circumstance is still remembered of a settler of a somewhat later period, trying to cross the Muskoka River on a pine tree near where the Bracebridge bridge now spans it. The settler had been imbibing liberally and his devious course over the log upset the centre of gravity.

He would have made food for pickerel, and a neat illustration for temperance lectures, but his ruin, in the shape of a demi-john which he carried with him, proved his salvation, since, it being tied to him, hung on one side of the tree, and balanced him, while he hung on the other, and was thus saved.

Before it was finally decided to open up Muskoka and Parry Sound, by a Free Grant colonization road, itself the forerunner of the bold and successful experiment of general free grants, the idea was seriously mooted in high quarters of throwing the whole district into one vast Indian reservation.

This scheme, however, fell to the ground, and in 1859, Mr. R. J. Oliver was appointed Locating Agent, met the settlers in October of the same year, at Severn Bridge and issued seventeen location tickets of land adjoining the road. In 1861, Morrison, Muskoka, Draper and Macaulay were offered for location.

At this time the settlers lived a very isolated life, far from each other, and far, not merely from the great centres of civilization, but from those lesser centres which furnished them with the necessities of life. Some had to walk forty miles to Orillia to buy provisions, or to mail a letter. They had to carry their flour home on their backs, over so-called roads of a most wretched description. On one occasion, settlers from the townships of Muskoka and Draper, finding no flour in Orillia had to walk a distance of 60 miles to Barrie and back. So isolated was the life of many a settler in the bush, that they almost lost count of time and seasons, and one man was thus encountered, who had been keeping Tuesday as the Lord's Day, for many months.

In 1861, Mr. R. J. Oliver crossed the north branch of the Muskoka River on the pine log above referred to, and met John Beal and David Smith, who were the first settlers north of the fall. In the same year, Mr. Thomas McMurray had only one neighbour within many miles of him, was 21 miles from the nearest post office and 35 miles from the nearest grist mill. There was only one settler in Draper, Macaulay, Stephenson, Mclean, Brunel, Ryde, Oakley, Chaffey, Monck, Watt, Humphrey, Wood and Medora. There was one house on the River, where Mr. A. Bailey and family resided.

A storm tossed sailor, in the cozy sitting room of his hotel recounts the recent fury of the ocean, recount the former trials which tested their endurance, while reminiscences of meals on birch buds, and of seed potatoes, dug up for food through grim necessity give zest to the enjoyment of plenteous viands. Things gradually mended and the once solitary settler encountered in amazement, new neighbours in his rambles through the bush. Families clustered together, schoolhouses often built on land given by the settlers, appeared. The faithful missionary held occasional, and then, more regular services, in the fast increasing centres of population.

New townships were surveyed and others organized with all the paraphernalia of reeves and councils. Settlers from the British Isles, of good standing at home, and possessed of means, began to buy improved farms. Thus, ready money – that one thing needful to cap the social pyramid – began to circulate more freely. This progress has been continuous up to the present hour, but, the rate of increase has itself increased with great rapidity. Since the appointment in May of the present Immigration Agent in Bracebridge, who is also the writer of this history, at least 28 thousand dollars of emigrant capital, exclusive of value of personal effects, has entered Muskoka from the Toronto agency, and through the indefatigable exertion of Mr. John A. Donaldson, the Dominion Agent in that city. Valuable settlers have also reached Muskoka from the Hamilton agency of the Dominion Government, ably presided over by Mr. Smith, Mr. Donaldson's 'confrere'.

Mr. Donaldson may congratulate himself on the result of his exertions which have resulted in the augmentation of our population by some very valuable settlers, who have no reason to regret their choice of new homes in the district of Muskoka. Through the Bracebridge agency, emigrants are distributed to the townships of Macaulay, McLean, Ridout and others, in the Bracebridge Crown Lands Agency, besides those further north, and also, occasionally to Perry Sound in winter, and to the Swiss settlement which has been inaugurated under the auspices of Baroness Von Koerber, in the Magnetawan district. The total number of emigrants entered on the books of the Bracebridge agency, from May to December, 1879, inclusive was 123. However few who possess more or less means, do not report themselves to the agent. In 1872, the first election was held for a representative in the Commons. The leading event of 1874 was the visit of Lord Dufferin, Governor General of Canada, to Bracebridge, and the other parts of Muskoka and Parry Sound.

Had the most insignificant and unintelligent commoner, then occupied the vice regal throne, he would have been received with respect as the delegate of the queen to her Muskoka people. But, when we remember, the then viceroy was of high rank and social standing, a gifted author, and a most admirable public speaker, that the hereditary legacy of genius descended from Sheridan had not been buried in darkness, but cultivated laboriously by him, and when we also remember that this was the pioneer visit of a Viceroy to Muskoka, we may easily realize the enthusiasm which followed his footsteps as he journeyed, and made his progress a sequence of sincere ovations.

He visited Bracebridge of July 27th. The din of workmen's hammers had hardly ceased, as they put the finishing strokes to the eight arches which spanned the village streets. At seven o'clock P.M., the Steamer Nipissing, with His Excellency Lord Dufferin on board arrived at the Bracebridge wharf. They drove around the principal streets of the village. Lord Dufferin preceded by steamer to Port Colborne, and thence, by land, to Parry Sound, where he bid farewell to the Free Grant Districts, his progress being one continued triumph. He stopped at the settlers homes, conversed with them, and especially interested himself in an Icelandic settler. No doubt a future edition of the Atlas will chronicle a similar visit of his successor, the Marquis of Lorne.

1876 – A resolution was passed in the Local House, Feb. 4th, offering a bonus of \$8000 per mile for the construction of an extension of the Northern Railway, to connect with the Georgian Bay branch of the Canada Pacific Railway near Lake Nipissing.

A radical change was made by an Act passed in the Local House in the regulation of licences for the sale of liquor. The inspection and licencing of Taverns was taken out of the hands of municipal councils and transferred to inspectors appointed by the Local Government. The present efficient inspector, Mr. E. F. Stephenson, who was first appointed under the new system for the district of Muskoka is of the opinion that the present system has worked admirably, and the result has been less illicit vending of liquors, and more orderly conduct of hotels, than formerly existed. There are some thirty licensed houses in the District of Muskoka.

In October 1876, vigorous efforts were made to induce the government to put a road in from Bracebridge to Huntsville. This artery of travel accommodates the traffic of nine townships of Muskoka proper, and about twelve of Parry Sound, while it is fed by nine important tributary roads which pierce large settlements.

The Bishop of Algoma arrived in February and made an extended missionary tour through Muskoka and Parry Sound.

The first installment of sixty farmers from Haldimand Township passed through Bracebridge in March en route to Ryerson Township.

In October, a very heavy rush of settlers set in. The wharf attendants at Bracebridge had to wait up at night, discharging trunks etc., and the hotels at Huntsville being so full, that the new arrivals had to sleep on floors and tables. The settlers came from Stratford, Chatham, and various parts of western Ontario. Forty thousand acres were located through the Bracebridge Crown Lands office alone.

In 1877, the Bracebridge Council granted a \$2,000. bonus to the Beardmore Brothers of Toronto (with tax exemptions for ten years of the proposed site of tannery to be erected). The erection of the tannery quickly followed and has since been enlarged and carried out on a much larger scale than that contemplated in the by-law, which only bound the firm to employ 12, instead of their present staff of 30 men. The magnitude of the scale on which the Beardmore Tannery is conducted, and the fact that the purchase money for bark finds its way to fertilize the purses of settlers within a radius of fifteen miles of Bracebridge justifies the insertion of a reference to this industry in the general history of Muskoka, though the whole burden of the bonus, and other expenses was borne by the village of Bracebridge.

This year was largely devoted in Muskoka as elsewhere to political excitement. After a hard contest, during which he bore testimony to the honourable conduct of Mr. W. E. O'Brien, his opponent, Mr. A. P. Cockburn was again returned to represent these Free Grant Districts in the Dominion Parliament.

The Northern Advocate, the pioneer journal of the district, was started in Parry Sound in September 1869 by Mr. Thomas McMurray. It was transferred to Bracebridge in September, 1870, and ably conducted under the editorial charge of Mr. James Boyer, our present Village Clerk. Much valuable information as to Muskoka and its resources was then circulated among intending immigrants and settlers, both in Canada and Great Britain. After Mr. McMurray's failure in 1874, it was bought by Mr. Courtney, continued in Bracebridge and abandoned after the death by drowning of the latter gentleman. Meanwhile, the publication of the Free Grant Gazette was commenced by Mr. E. F. Stephenson, the present proprietor, in 1871, and continues now under the same ownership. The publication of the Gazette, led to a large reduction in the price of newspaper work and job work. Mr. Stephenson also carried on the publication of the Huntsville Liberal under the editorship of Dr. Howland. After the discontinuance of the Liberal, the Huntsville Forrester made its appearance on November 2, 1877 and is still published in that town.

On May, 1876, Gravenhurst felt the journalistic wave, and saw the first number of The Lumberman, a publication which lived till November 24, of the same year. Mr. Stephenson also for a time established a job office at Gravenhurst.

Meanwhile, Mr. McMurray, the former proprietor of The Advocate, who is now Crown Lands Agent at Parry Sound, commenced in 1874, and still continues the publication of The North Star in that village.

In April, 1878, the village of Bracebridge saw the advent of The Herald, a Conservative journal. Messrs. Graffe and Co., proprietors, which is still continued, The Free Grant Gazette being the organ of the Reformers. All the journals which have been chronicled are weekly newspapers devoted to the presentation of general and local news, and the present list consists of the Free Grant Gazette and Herald, both published in Bracebridge, The Forrester, issued in Huntsville, and the North Starr in Parry Sound.

A non-political glance at the parliamentary history of the district may be lastly given.

Muskoka now has double representation, namely, in Ottawa, and Toronto. In 1867, the constituency, that is, the then existing nucleus of Muskoka, namely, the new townships of Morrison and Macaulay, formed part of North Victoria. Mr. A. P. Cockburn, was elected for the local house to represent it, having defeated the late Joseph Staples, by a majority of 269. In 1875, the first election for a representative in the local house occurred, and Mr. J.P. Miller, our present member, was the successful candidate, his opponent being the late Mr. Long of Bracebridge. A petition against his return was tried by the judge, in the Dufferin Hall of Bracebridge, and, adversely to Mr. Miller. The decision was reversed however, by the full bench.

Mr. A. P. Cockburn, (Reform) was the first Dominion representative of Muskoka, having defeated the late Mr. D'Arcy Boulton, by a majority of 126. Again, in 1874, he was elected to the Dominion Parliament, by a majority of 309 over the late Mr. Teviotdale of Bracebridge. At the last general election in 1878, Mr. Cockburn was again returned to represent Muskoka in the Ottawa Parliament, by a majority of 74 over Mr. W. E. O'Brien of Shanty Bay, County of Simcoe.

In bringing the history to a close, let the writer disclaim any intention of presenting it to the public, as either exhaustive or perfect. It is only a bird's eye view of some of the leading incidents in the progress of Muskoka from zero to its present flourishing condition. More minute details, however, will be found elsewhere, in the descriptions of localities and townships.

Navigation

The progress of navigation in Muskoka is so important, and so excellent an index of the general progress of the settlement, that it is here treated as a separate topic rather than being included in the general body of the history. It is substantially given in the "Undeveloped Portions of Ontario", but revised up to the close of navigation in 1878. Many requisites for successful steam navigation are found combined by nature in the inland waters of Muskoka – early opening and late closing of the lakes and rivers, depth of waters, rapid deepening of the waters as we recede from the shore, excellence of the harbours, freedom from encrustation of boiler, but, above all, the long and convenient water stretches placed by Nature just where they can be utilized for the highways of colonization.

During a great part of the year, we are thus, in many localities, independent of roads, and we have a sure and cheap mode of transporting heavy freight, and also readymade highways for the moving of lumber. These advantages would not have come to fruition if Mr. A. P. Colborne, the Muskoka and Parry Sound Dominion Parliament, had not had the foresight to realize the enterprising opportunities of Muskoka. In these days of prosperity, the districts were intersected by a network of roads, telegraphs, steam navigation, stage lines and post offices. Many energetic speculators were ready to put a steamer on any lake or river, where the least chance of traffic exists the establishment of a new steam boat line is taken as a matter of course. It is with difficulty, therefore, that we retrace the stream of time and, in imagination, live under the disadvantages and gloomy

prospects, which might well have appalled Mr. Colborne, in his efforts to initiate steam navigation in Muskoka in 1865.

Let us then briefly trace the history of Muskoka navigation, remembering, that even now, the bulk of the traffic whether immigrant or commercial, of Muskoka, and of those portions of Parry Sound which are tributary to Rosseau and Bracebridge, is carried over the lakes Muskoka, Rosseau and Joseph, and also the Muskoka River, so that the history of our navigation is the history of our progress. The overflowing freight houses and increasing fleet of steam boats refute the sneers of the enemies of Muskoka with unanswerable power.

The first human ripple on the surface of these waters proceeded from the birch bark canoe of the untutored red man. John Bell reached the township of Macaulay in 1861 by canoe. He is said to have spent five days discovering the mouth of the river, in order to reach the North Falls, now the flourishing village of Bracebridge. Mr. James Cooper, introduced the first wood boat in 1862, to be followed by McCabe's sail boat in 1863, and Mr. James Sharpe's in 1864. All three boats were employed in the business of carrying passengers and freight to various points on the lakes. The rates then charged for land by carriage and water transportation between Washago (head of Lake Simcoe) and Gravenhurst was 75 cents. Mr. Holditch, about this time, constructed a large flat boat, to be propelled by horse power. The boat was built at North Falls, Bracebridge and made a trip to McCabe's Bay, Gravenhurst, but never returned again. The boat took 12 hours going on her trip, now performed in less than two hours. About the same time, the Bradley Brothers, built an expensive sloop for the trade, but it, like the horse boat, was a failure.

In September, 1865, Mr. A. P. Cockburn, , but then, merchant and reeve in the township of Eldon, in the county of Victoria, made an examination of the Muskoka region including the Lake of Bays, Peninsula and Vernon and Fairy Lakes, and the Magnetawan River, returning by way of Lake Muskoka, and he was much impressed by the beauty and importance of these lakes. He returned shortly afterwards with Mr. James Cooper and sailed over Lake Muskoka to examine the reputed natural obstructions to navigation at Indian Village, now Port Carling. Mr. Cockburn forwarded a paper on the back country to the Hon. T. D. Magee, then the commissioner of agriculture, with a report of his observations, and some practical suggestions of a policy of road and other improvements, which, if the Government would promise to make, he would undertake to place a steamer on the lakes to facilitate settlement.

Mr. Magee and the Government felt highly pleased and interested in Mr. Cockburn's representations; and in particular, Mr. Magee returned Mr. Cockburn's communication, with a flattering request that Mr. Cockburn should have it printed, which was done under the title of "A Few Weeks in the North". The result of the negotiations were, that the keel of the Wenonah be immediately laid, and the steamer opened up steam navigation trade, by making her first trip in 1866, arriving at North Falls, Bracebridge, when there was not 20 people in the place to greet her arrival. The rate of freight from Washago to North Falls were reduced from 75 cents down to 40 cents, and the freight was always brought through punctually from McCabe's Bay, Gravenhurst. The Wenonah continued to ply alone, and generally at a loss to its owner, until in 1869, the Waubhamik was brought up to assist in the dispatch of the growing traffic. In 1871, a fine low pressure steamer, Nipissing was added, and in the spring of 1876, the powerful steam tug Simcoe formed another auxiliary in the Muskoka fleet. In 1877, a marine slip or railway was constructed at Gravenhurst, on which the Nipissing was raised, overhauled, and a hurricane deck added, together with a cabin on the promenade deck. A large scow was also built, and has been used for the conveyance of lime, tanbark, etc.

The steamer Northern, was launched at Port Sydney in 1877, and plies between that village and Huntsville, and other ports on Mary, Fairy and Vernon lakes.

In 1878, the Dean was transported by land carriage from Gravenhurst to Trading Lake, and plies between Baysville and a number of ports on Trading Lake and Lake of Bays.

A small steam launch owned by Messrs. Rodick and Rogers, plies Rosseau, Joseph and Lake Muskoka, for the service of tourists in the season. There is also a steamer running on the Magnetawan River and Se-sebe Lake as far as Burk's Falls, about thirty miles steaming altogether.

The latest addition to the steamer fleet of Muskoka and Parry Sound, is a steamer belonging to Messrs. Charlebois and Flood, the contractors for the Georgian Bay branch, an plying between the mouth of the French River, and the terminus of the road.

Description of Townships

Muskoka Agency

In the Muskoka Agency, there are 16 townships now open for location as Free Grants: Brunel, Chaffey, Draper, Franklin, Macaulay, Medora, Monck, Morrison, Muskoka, Mclean, Oakley, Ridout, Ryde, Stephenson, Stisted, Watt, Wood and Cardwell. The last named township, although in the Muskoka District is attached to the Parry Sound Agency. Persons wishing to locate in that township must apply to the agent in Parry Sound. The Crown Land Agent in Bracebridge for the above Townships is Mr. Aubrey White.

Morrison

The township of Morrison was surveyed in 1860 by Mr. J. O'Brian, P.L.S. About one half the township is settled. The district around Sparrow Lake contains some fine farms.

The Village of Severn Bridge at the crossing of the Severn River contains two stores, hotel, post office, telegraph office, Orange Hall, and other buildings. There is another hotel at the station of the Northern Railway across the bridge.

The Northern Railway traverses this township from south to north, and has one station at Lethbridge, about halfway between Severn Bridge and Gravenhurst.

Muskoka

Gravenhurst lies in this township. Gravenhurst, the present Muskoka terminus of the Northern Railway lies in the township, and in December 1878 contain about 200 houses, a hardware store, eight dry good stores, 11 shingle mills, two shoe makers, one tailor, two watch makers, three dress makers, two saddlers, one attorney-at-law, four hotels, two bakers, one butcher, one book store, one flour and feed store, one doctor, one drug store, one foundry, boarding house, three telegraph offices, waiting rooms, ticket offices, freight sheds, windmill, pumps, etc.. It possesses a town hall (with lock-up underneath) public school and four churches, and claims twelve hundred in habitants.

Macaulay

Macaulay, where Bracebridge is located contains 38,639 acres of land and 1341 miles of shoreline. It is practically out of the market as a Free Grant Township. Farms are occasionally to be had at reasonable rates. Roads to Baysville, Huntsville and Gravenhurst etc. radiate through the township from Bracebridge. A bridge is needed

near High Falls, as settlers are on opposite sides of the north branch of the Muskoka River, and have to detour through Bracebridge to visit each other. Lake Muskoka and the River are also used as means of transit by the settlers, there being a large number of private boats of various kinds in use, besides Mr. Cockburn's daily steamers.

Bracebridge is a centre, the importance of which is not measurable by its present population, but rather by the rapidity with which it increases and the nine solid pillars hereafter described, on which the prosperity of the village is built.

1. Bracebridge has excellent water privileges at the Falls, which presently supports a grist mill, woollen mill, and perhaps six good sized factories, if fully utilized.
2. Bracebridge is the terminus of navigation on the Muskoka River. There are only two apparent dangers in the future to the traffic, one, the possible erection of locks to evade the Falls, the other, the building of a railway passing through Bracebridge, and piercing the heart of the back country without break or halting place. (The author goes into this latter danger rather fully)
3. Bracebridge is centrally located in the District of Muskoka. It is not the geometrical centre, but it is the centre in a very practical sense of the population of the District of Muskoka, and a large portion of Parry Sound.
4. Bracebridge possesses the Registry Office for the entire District of Muskoka, the Division Court, lock-up. The Registry Office and lock-up were built of brick, by the Ontario Government.
5. It is the point of confluence and divergence for the travel and business of the greater part of Muskoka, and a large part of Parry Sound.
6. Bracebridge is the religious, educational, literary and journalistic centre of Muskoka and Parry Sound. It is the residence of the Roman Catholic Bishop and the headquarters of the Canada Methodist and Presbyterian churches.
7. Bracebridge is the manufacturing centre having two tanneries, one of which is the best on the continent, woollen mill, planning mill, grist mill, and a large sash and door factory. Events foreshadow a very large increase in the number of these and other industries.
8. Bracebridge has got the start so far as manufacture and trade are concerned.
9. The ruling men in Bracebridge are shrewd, keenly alive to the interests of the village, and not likely to throw chances away. This they achieved by giving a \$2,000. incentive to Beardmore Tannery.

The village also taxes itself heavily for the support of the fire department. Every Muskoka enterprise, whether it be a cheese factory or a provisional County scheme, originates in Bracebridge, where also is the centre of political caucuses of both political creeds. The Muskoka people look to Bracebridge to take the initiative in every great social, political or religious movement, and they do not look in vain.

It is hard to lay one's finger on the exact moment of the birth of the village. We may first name James Cooper (father of Joseph Cooper, saw-mill owner and councillor of Bracebridge) who squatted on land which is now within the village limits. James Cooper's land included both sides of the Falls. Alexander Bailey bought out Cooper's claim in 1863. Messrs. Perry and Myers bought Bailey out. John Beal and David Leith squatted about the same time, and together with James Cooper, were the pioneers of Bracebridge. In 1861 Bracebridge consisted of the

log huts and potato patches of Messrs. John Beal and David Leith. James Cooper's log house and a small brick tavern and store, built on the south side of the river (there being no bridge, save a large pine tree which spanned the Falls), by Hiram Macdonald. James Cooper built a tavern in 1865, at which time there was only a weekly mail to what is now Bracebridge. In 1866, two or three little bush stores were carried on by Gilman Wilson, William Holditch and Hiram Macdonald, also a frame store built by A. H. Browning in the bush (as it then was), and Joseph Cooper's frame house on the main street. Then, Mr. John Teviotdale's arrival gave the village an impetus, as he built the first large, substantial store in the village. Mr. Teviotdale, to his death, continued to be a prominent citizen, and made large improvements to the village, where his widow now resides.

In 1870, Messrs. Perry and Myers came to the village from Whitby. Mr. R. E. Perry is a Canadian, and the son of the late Peter Perry who represented the County of Ontario in the old Parliament and his brother is the registrar of Whitby. Mr. T. M. Myers is a native of England. Messrs. Perry and Myers, after their arrival in Bracebridge, bought out Bailey's property, consisting of saw-mill and grist mill, with 100 acres of land, part of which is now within the village limits, and largely built on. The price was \$6000, and the price included the whole water power of the falls, which they now retain with the exception of the portion sold by them to Mr. Bird, the owner of the woollen mill. Subsequently, Mr. Perry bought the grist mill. At the time when Messrs. Perry and Myers arrived, there were about 12 houses in Bracebridge, approximately 100 people, four large hotels: the old Royal, a log building kept by G. F. Gow, where the Dominion now stands. People had to stage it to Orillia, about 36 miles, to make purchases. Messrs. Perry and Myers bought the stock, and rented the only store in the village from Mr. Teviotdale. Subsequently, Mr. Myers purchased the store itself, and adjacent property. At that time, stages only travelled once a week to Parry Sound and Huntsville. Huntsville consisted of one or two houses. There were only the steamers Wenonah and Waubamik plying their trade on the lake.

There was no transport or telegraph office. In winter, goods were brought from Orillia. In summer, they had to be drawn up from the wharf in a one horse sled, owned by Mr. Gow. There were no wheeled vehicle, and the sight was often witnessed of a merchant toiling through the slush, up the hill from the wharf, with a parcel of goods on his back.

The Methodists worshipped in the Orange Hall. Their minister, Rev. S. B. Phillips lives in a part of a small stable, with a quilt for a window. In the autumn, they built a Methodist parsonage. Messrs. Clerihue, partner of Mr. Hunt, and Dill arrived not long after Mr. Myers and do a large business now in the village.

In 1872, the population of Bracebridge was about 500. On October 6th, St. Thomas' Anglican Church opened.

In listing the various institutions and public societies of the village which existed in 1877, there is one rather interesting article here.

The Winter Evening Amusement Association has been in existence for more than four years, and, under the able leadership of Mr. Burden, proprietor of the Queen's Hotel. He collected an excellent company of local amateurs, who provide excellent Shakespearian dramatic entertainment during the winter season.

There is a first class cricket club in the town and a baseball club. In speaking of the Agricultural Society of Muskoka and Parry Sound, it holds its annual meeting and supper in the village and has its own fenced in grounds, and agriculture shed on the village outskirts.

The churches listed – St. Thomas Anglican Church, the Canada Methodist Church, the Presbyterian Church, with Rev. A. Findlay. He has charge of 33 stations which he inspects twice a year. There is also a Primitive Methodist Church and St. Joseph's Roman Catholic Church.

Bracebridge has two hardware stores, six general stores, seven groceries, one drug store, a photographer, two flour and feed stores, three bakeries, three butchers, three tailors, one book and variety store, two milliners, six dressmakers, one watchmaker and jeweller, one cooper, one saw mill, one planning mill (a little outside the village), five tinsmiths, seven painters, 26 carpenters, four wagon shops, two canneries, wharf, wharf house, and grain store, two newspaper and job offices, six printers, three conveyancers, three auctioneers and five solicitors.

McLean Township

McLean Township contains 37,544 acres of land, and 4600 acres of water. Mr. Burns P.L.S. who surveyed the township in 1862, reports it has favourable soil and water privileges from the Muskoka River, which intersects it diagonally. A few Free Grant lots are still to be had. A steamer runs from Baysville to various ports on Trading Lake and Lake of Bays. Baysville is destined to grow into a thriving village, being near the centre of McLean and the intersection of three important roads. Lumbering operations also extend north, on streams of which the headwaters lie near the Ottawa. Baysville is the centre for tourists, sportsmen and anglers, who like salmon trout, ducks, partridge and deer. Echo Lake, not far from Baysville, boasts places where seven first class echoes are heard.

Baysville contains a grist mill, saw mill, shingle mill, wharf, three stores, school house where Primitive Methodists and Presbyterians worship and 25 houses. The early settlers are Brown, Dickie, Bastedo and the Langford's. The Indians used to do all their fur trading on Bigwin Island. Chief Bigwin, his daughter and several other Indians are buried on Bigwin Island. Cedar pickets whittled off with a jack knife, show the place of the graves, amid cedars and poplars. A window sash, whittled out with a jack knife, and regularly morticed, which was found among the remains of an Indian house prove their ingenuity.

Ridout

Ridout township contains 33,785 acres of land, and 3,779 acres of water. The land is high and rolling. The whole township is covered with the finest description of timber. The Government surveyor, Mr. Rykert, surveyed Ridout in 1862.

Franklin

Franklin Township has 31,624 acres of land, and 7,976 acres of water. It was placed in the market in 1877. It is well watered, contains a sufficient amount of pine, cedar etc., for the wants of settlers, and water power to drive grist and saw mills. Mr. Marsh has a saw mill in the township. Franklin is rapidly settling up, and will probably be in a few years an important township.

Stephenson

Port Sydney on Mary Lake is a charming village. Here, tourists can find a comfortable and well-kept hotel and enjoyable boating excursions along the picturesque shores of Mary Lake. The Anglican Church in the village, a large Gothic edifice, furnished with stained glass windows, is a lasting monument to Reverend Cooper. Port

Sydney has also a public school, good private residences, a large public hall in which amateur dramatic performances are given, with great effect, a grist mill, an oatmeal mill, saw mill, and some good stores. It is reached from Huntsville in the summer by the Northern steamboat, and enjoys a tri-weekly mail from Bracebridge, with a daily stage in the summer.

Brunel

Brunel Township has 41,206 acres of land and 3,437 acres of water. Rocky land comprises about one seventh of the entire township. All the available land in the township appears to be located.

Chaffey

Huntsville in Chaffey township is located on the stream connecting Fairy and Vernon Lakes. It is about 25 miles from Bracebridge by daily stage in the winter, and in the summer, the journey is made by steamboat to Port Sydney, thence by stage to Bracebridge. There is also a tri-weekly stage to Katrine and Emsdale. Huntsville has three churches: Presbyterian, Anglican and Canada Methodist, Public school, Orange Hall, Temperance Lodge, doctor, printing and job office, weekly newspaper, the Forrester, telegraph office, freight office, two hotels, five general stores, hardware store, butcher, shoe maker, tailor, milliner, dressmaker, harness shop, two blacksmiths, seven carpenters, a pump and wagon shop and two saw mills. Mr. Hunt erected a bark roofed shanty, in the then unbroken forest, nine years ago, where Huntsville now stands and this shanty was the gathering place of the clans, for all secular or religious meetings.

Appendixes

Appendix "A" – extracts from the Free Grant Act of 1868

No person shall be located for any land under this act of said regulations, unless such person is age 18 years or older, nor shall any person be so located for any quantity greater than 200 acres.

Before any person is located for any land as aforesaid, such person shall make an affidavit, to be deposited with the Agent authorized to make such location, stating that he has not been located for any land under this Act or said regulations, and that he is of the age of 18 years or upwards and believes the land for which he applies to be located is suited for settlement and cultivation, and is not valuable chiefly for its mines, minerals or pure timber, and that such location is desired for his benefit, and for the purpose of actual settlement, and cultivation of such land, and not either directly or indirectly for the use or benefit of any other person or persons whomsoever, nor for the purpose of obtaining, possessing or disposing of any of the pine trees growing or being on the said land, or any benefit or advantage therefrom of any gold, silver, copper, lead, iron or other minerals, or any quarry, or bed of stone, marble or gypsum, thereon.

No Free Land Grant shall be issued for any land, or under said regulations, until the expiration of five years from the date of such location, nor until locate, or those claiming under him, or some of them, have performed the following settlement duties, that is to say: Have cleared and have under cultivation, at least 15 acres of the said land (whereof at least two acres shall be cleared and cultivated annual during the five years next after the date of the location, to be computed from such date), and have built a house thereon, fit for habitation, at least 16 feet by 20 feet, and have actually and continuously resided upon cultivated the said land for a term of five years next succeeding the date of location, and from thence up to the issue of the patent, except that the locate shall be allowed one month from the date of location to enter upon and occupy the land, and that absence from the said land for in all, not more than six months in any one year (to be computed from the date of the location) shall not

be held to be a cessation of such residence, provided such land be cultivated as aforesaid. On failure of performance of the settlement duties aforesaid, the location shall be forfeited, and all rights of the locatee, or anyone claiming under him, in the land shall cease.

All pine trees growing or being upon any land so located, and all gold, silver, lead, iron, or other mines or minerals, shall be considered as reserved from said location and shall be the property of Her Majesty, except that the locatee, or those claiming under him, may cut and use such trees as may be necessary, for the purpose of building, fencing and fuel on the land so located, and may also cut and dispose of all trees required to be removed in actual clearing of land for cultivation, but, no pine trees, (except for the necessary building, fencing, and fuel as aforesaid) shall be cut beyond the limit of such actual clearing before the issuing of the patent; and, all pine trees so cut and disposed of (except for the necessary building, fencing and fuel, as aforesaid) shall be subject to the payment of the same dues as are at the time payable by the holders of licences, to cut timber or saw logs.

Trees remaining on the land at the time the said patent is issued, shall pass to the patentee (neither the locatee, nor anyone claiming under him shall have power to alienate (otherwise than by desire) or to mortgage or pledge any land located as aforesaid, or any right or interest therein, before the issue of the patent). No alienation, (otherwise than by desire) and no mortgage or pledge of such land or of any right or interest therein by the locatee, after the issue of the patent, and within twenty years from the date of such location, and during the lifetime of the wife of the locatee, shall be valid or of any effect, unless the same be by deed, in which the wife of the locatee is one of the grantors with the husband, nor, unless such deed is duly executed by her.

Every patent to be issued for any land located as aforesaid, shall state in the body thereof, the name of the original locatee of the land, and the date of said location, and that the said patent is desired under the authority of this Act.

On the death of the locatee, whether before or after the issue of the patent for any land so located, all his then right and interest in such land, shall descend to and become vested in his widow, during her widowhood, in lieu of dower, in which case, there be such widow surviving such locatee, but, such widow may elect to have her dower in such land in lieu of the provision aforesaid.

No land located as aforesaid, nor any interest therein, shall, in any event be, or become liable to the satisfaction of any debt or liability contracted or incurred by the locatee, his widow, heirs or devisees before the issuing of the patent for such land.

After the issuing of the patent for any such land, and while such land, or any part thereof, or any interest therein, is owned by the locatee, or his widow, heirs or devisees, such land, part or interest shall, during twenty years next after the date of location, be exempt from attachment levy under execution or sale for payment of debts, and shall not be or become liable to the satisfaction of any debt or liability contracted or incurred before or during that period, save and except any debt secured by a valid mortgage or pledge of such land, made subsequently to the issuing of the patent.

Nothing in this Act shall be construed to exempt any land from levy on sale for rates or taxes heretofore, or hereafter legally imposed.

Orders and Regulations

Made under "The Free Grant and Homestead Act of 1868" and "The Public Lands Act of 1860", By order of His Excellency, the Lieutenant Governor in council, dated May 27, 1869.

1. The quantity of land to be located to any person as a Free Grant, under the Free Grants and Homestead Act of 1868, subsequently to January 23, 1869, will be 100 acres of farmable land. In cases where the acreage is rock or water, the quantity located to such person may be increased, in the discretion of the Commissioner of Crown Lands, to a size not exceeding a total of 200 acres.
2. Any male locatee shall be allowed to purchase an additional 100 acres, at a cost of 50 cents per acre cash, at the time of such location, subject to the same reservations and conditions and the performance of the same settlement duties as are provided in respect to Free Grant locations, by the 9th and 10th sections of the said Act, except that actual residence in building on the land purchased will not be required.
3. The right is reserved to the Crown, to construct on any land located under the said Act, or sold, as herein before provided, any colonization road, or any road in lieu thereof, or partly deviating from any Government allowance for road; also the right to take from any such land any wood, gravel or other materials required for the construction or improvement of any such road, without making any compensation for the land or materials so taken or for any injury, occasioned by the construction of such road on such rights, may be exercised by the Commissioner of Crown Lands, or anyone authorized by him for that purpose.
4. Holders of timber licences, their servants and agents are to have the right to haul their timber or logs over the uncleared portion of any land located as a Free Grant, or purchased as before provided, and to build roads necessary for that purpose, doing any unnecessary damage, and to use all slides, portages, roads, or other works previously constructed or existing on any lands so located or sold, and the right of access to, and the free use of all streams and lakes therefore used, or that may be necessary for the passage of timber or logs, and all land necessary for such work is reserved.
5. All pine trees growing upon any land hereafter located as a Free Grant under the said Act, or sold under the preceding regulations, shall be subject to any timber licence in force at the time of such location or sale, or granted within five years subsequently thereto, and may at any time before the issue of the patent for such land, be cut and removed under the authority of any such timber licence while lawfully in force.

Signed,
S. Richards
Commissioner of Crown Lands

Appendix B

Closed season for game and fur bearing animals in Ontario

Deer, elk, moose, reindeer or caribou cannot be hunted, taken or killed from the 15th of Dec. to the 15th of Sept. in the following year. Wild turkeys, grouse, pheasants, prairie fowl, partridge, from the 1st of Feb. to the 1st of Oct.

(I have recorded this to verify what I suspected from the Dwight-Wiman history - because it seemed that they hunted before what is now regarded as the legal hunting season.)

MUSKOKA AND THE NORTHERN LAKES OF CANADA

by Barlow Cumberland

Published by Hunter, Rose and Company, Printers.

A guide to the best spots for water side resorts, hotels, camping, outfit, fishing and shooting, routes of travel, with sectional maps of the lakes and illustrations. This is the second edition with latest information.

There is a map of the Lake of Bays district, drawn for the Northern Lakes of Canada. In it, it shows the Lake of Bays. Haystack Bay is named, but, Seabreeze Bay between Haystack Bay and Trading Bay is listed as Wiman Bay. Dwight Bay is called North Bay. Dwight has Goudie's Hotel. It is interesting that just to the right of Dwight, are the lakes mentioned in the Dwight Wiman history. The first of these is Devil's Angle Lake, progressing from that, (it would appear to be northwards) is Long Lake. To the left of Long Lake, is Cooper's Lake. Beyond Long Lake is Little Twin, and Big Twin. Just to the left of that, is Crotch Lake. Just up (north) from Big Twin, is Poverty Lake. To the left of that is Buck Lake, and, to the left of that again, is Clear Lake. It would appear that the Clear Lake is probably the one on which Limberlost is situated.

The Muskoka district is a region of many lakes, of all sizes and forms, where canoeing and boating, from hamlet to along the shores, combines the safety of a scattered population with the wildness of uncultivated wastes. This is no matter of choice or taste with the hardy settler, for Nature has so accumulated the rocks and wilds along the shores, that only at intervening spots can sufficient breadth of soil be found on which to farm. The hotels are moderate houses, where plain meals, fresh milk, clean rooms. This does not mean "roughing it in the bush", but common, simple wants are fully supplied. A whole family can have a happy holiday at little cost.

From maps of the so-called Muskoka Lakes – that is, Joseph, Rosseau and Muskoka – it appears that Port Cockburn is right at the very head of Lake Joseph. Also Camp Yohokucaba – group of islands, is to the south and west of that, almost directly opposite from what is marked here on the map as Shanty Bay – also, it is almost directly opposite from Little Lake Joseph.

By the North Branch

From Huntsville, the voyageur returning down the river to join the railway again at Bracebridge or, further on at Gravenhurst, has two routes: either the north or south branches of the Muskoka River.

In taking the first, the steamer can pass through Fairy Lake (five miles), and then the River again is entered.

For the furtherance of navigation, a lock has been constructed by the Ontario Government, near Fetterley's, and by this means, after three miles more of river navigation, winding and re-winding throughout, the next lake of the chain is reached.

Mary Lake is one of the gems of Muskoka. Many neat residences with clearings of some extent, adorn its shores. Its surface is studded with many berries of various kinds plentiful in the season. At the foot of the lake is the village of Port Sydney. Sydney Hotel provides excellent accommodations from Mr. Jeff Avery. A good supply of boats is kept, and pleasant trips can be made upon the romantic little lakes. From Port Sydney return to the railway can be made by 2 ½ miles drive to the station at Utterson.

For those who do not venture on small boating or canoes, the steamboat route, between Hoodstown and Port Sydney upon the "Little Trio" – Vernon, Fairy and Mary, is a very pretty excursion, and give additional zest to the enjoyment of the larger and more well-known lakes.

Those however who do canoe, can take the Muskoka River from Port Sydney and enjoy the unique sensation of running a rapid. In the route of 15 miles to Bracebridge, there are some of the rapids which are not safe to run, but which must be portaged. The entrances to all are well marked, so that a watchful eye will keep the canoe from danger. It will be best to leave in the morning, and then the run through can be made in the day.

By the South Branch

The other choice of route in returning from Huntsville is confined to canoeists. Passing easterly through the length of Fairy Lake, a narrow is entered, in which are two portages, each of 100 feet length, on the right or south bank, and thus access is obtained to Peninsula Lake. On the North shore is Grassmere Post Office, and, at the South East end (7 miles) a portage of 1 ½ miles brings one to Lake of Bays. The convenience of a wagon will easily be obtained, from some neighbouring settler. Thence to Baysville, at the foot of the lake, is 12 miles, and from there, 25 miles by river to the South Branch of the Muskoka, to Bracebridge.

Some people may prefer to go upstream, so, we will start with them, from Bracebridge. It may be well for the canoeist, who is making his first acquaintance with these river waters, to begin by going upstream, as he will thus become acquainted with the indications of rapids, and by no chance run into danger. The South Branch of the Muskoka River is the starting point for some of the best fishing districts of Muskoka. Among others are Walter's Creek, Hollow Lake, Wood Lake, Sharpe's Creek, all celebrated for their brook trout.

A stage runs regularly from Bracebridge to Baysville, sixteen miles, leaving on arrival of the mail trains, and arriving in the evening.

Leaving Bracebridge by water, the tourist can either descend the Muskoka River by canoe to the river forks, thence up the South Branch to the foot of the great South Falls, where the first portage must be made, or, bringing the canoes and camping equipment by wagon, can, at this same point, commence the ascent of the river.

The stream is rapid, and several portages must be made during the first day. At some, the baggage is carried round by land, and a canoe poled up the rapids; at others, the Indians shoulder the canoes. At Rocky Portage, good ground is found for the first camp. On the second day, Island Portage is reached at noon, and Gravelly Rapids for the night. At both these points there is good trout fishing. On the third day, Cedar Rapids are passed and, at the upper falls near Baysville, the best camping ground is found. The river here runs fast, tumbling down in rocky rapids, and the best speckled trout fishing afforded.

Baysville, on the river, and 1 ½ miles from the entrance to the lake, is a capital resort for the tourist and sportsman. Those who are on the round trip will find it about a day's canoeing from the upper falls to the camping ground at the portage to Peninsula Lake. There are good local supply stores in the town, and arrangements for steamboat trips on the lakes can be made with Captain Huckins.

Lake of Bays

This is the largest of the lakes which are tributaries to the Muskoka River being about 20 miles in length. In width, it is eccentric, and fully deserves its name. There are not many islands in it, but it is superlative in jutting points, clad with the dark green outlines of the finest pine timber. Canoeists who are exploring its shores, had better, after taking the south east trip towards Dorset, return north by Haystack Bay and make the short portage to North East Bay. As not having been so accessible, the shores of its deep, clear waters remain more in the state of nature than any other. Neither the settler's axe, nor the fires of careless camping parties have denuded the banks of

their leafy coverings. The streams falling into this lake are interspersed with rapids and waterfalls, which form home and harbour for many speckled trout. It is somewhat peculiar to note, that this class of fish seem to be almost restricted in this section, and run up to three or four pounds. Whitefish and salmon trout are found in the lake itself. Hollow, Fletcher and Hardwood Lakes are all on the eastern branch of the main lake, and noted for their trout.

Captain Huckins' steamers, Dean and Excelsior with a 75 feet keel, keep up the communications between Baysville and the post offices and settlements around the lake.

North East Bay, near Dwight Post Office, is a continuation of the river entering the lake. Upon its waters are strung out a long series of little lakes, all affording good sport, among them Oxtongue, Canoe, Island, Big Joe and other lakes. By this chain, there is a canoe route which has already been followed by several parties, which, arriving at the headwaters of the Muskoka, make a short portage to the Petewawa, and Madewaska Rivers, thence down to the Ottawa River, a round trip of much attractiveness and variety. Gouldie's Hotel at Dwight will make a good headquarters, and a ready welcome be assured to all good sportsmen.

The district around the Lake of Bays is most highly esteemed for its deer, duck and partridge shooting. Indeed, whether by rod or gun, the visitor is sure to enjoy. The grounds of the Dwight-Wiman Sporting Club" has become known for rest, recreation, zest and fresh energy. Erastus Wiman whose successes in the United States seem only to intensify his affection for his native land.

From Gouldie's, a line of excellent lakes runs north, all full of sport Cooper, Devil's Angle, Long, Little Twin, Big Twin, Crotch, Poverty, Buck and Clear Lakes, all communicating by short portages.

Good sport, canoes and guides who know where the best fishing spots are and trained dogs, accustomed to the vicinity for hunting are all necessary. The names of the best men, well known and reliable from having already conducted fishing and hunting parties in this district, are given in the list of guides.

It is often true economy to engage the services of those whose local knowledge will most quickly bring the newcomer to the best places for engaging in the sport for which he seeks, and in all events they will lighten his labours, and will certainly add to his pleasures. In canoeing, dangers may often be avoided. When deer hunting, there is a necessity to have a guide who knows the bush.

Men and boys to row, may be engaged from \$1.00 to \$1.80 per day
Experienced fishermen and huntsmen, including canoes, \$2.00 per day
Hounds, 50 cents per day

The following men have been locally recommended

Lake of Bays, and South Branch Muskoka River, Dorset P.O.

Allan Phillips, Alvin Phillips, Henry Sawyer, Chris. Sawyer, Matthew McCaw, Tom Keown.

Dwight Post Office

Thos. E. Salmon, Archie Gouldie, Edward Gouldie, William Blackwell, Frank Blackwell, Arthur Osborne, Tom Salmon, George Robson, Grieves Robson, James Trueman, William Trueman.

Baysville

Daniel Vanclieaf, Henry Vanclieaf, Samuel Vanclieaf.

Forest House – Jordan Keeler, Proprietor

Mr. W.H. Brown, of Baysville, is also referred to as an obliging correspondent.

Tourists can enjoy unrivalled scenery on Lake of Bays. Two first class steamboats ply on its waters during season; rare sport for speckled trout in this region: the neighbouring woods abound in deer and partridge; ample accommodation; excellent table; every attention to guests.

Menominee Post Office

Jeff Avery and his Sons

FREE GRANTS OF LANDS OF CANADA

Thomas McMurray, J.P.

Printed and published by Northern Advocate, 1871

Preface

The fact of my being the first settler in the township of Draper, Macaulay, Stephenson, etc., in the District of Muskoka, has given me considerable notoriety. I have received letters from all parts of the world, asking for information about the country. I have always willingly responded to those appeals. There are tens of thousands in the United Kingdom, and many even in Canada, who are enquire whether this country is fit for settlement, or not.

History of the Early Settlement of Muskoka

The road to Washago commenced in 1858.

In the fall of 1859, Mr. R. J. Oliver was appointed Locating Agent at \$4.00 per day, under the government of the Hon. John A. Macdonald and Crown Lands Commissioner Mr. P. M. Vankoughnet. On October 1, 1859, he met the settlers at the Severn Bridge, and issued about 17 locations. Donald Ferguson, a brave highland Scotchman was the first settler in the Township of Draper. At this period, the road extended to the South Falls, and the bridge was not built. Donald crossed the river, and located on a lovely spot close to the Falls, on the north side of the river. While lots on the road were located in the fall of 1859, it was not till 1861, that the lands in the townships of Morrison, Muskoka, Draper and Macaulay were made available.

Mr. R. J. Oliver was appointed Crown Lands Agent in May, in this same year, that the writer became a resident of Draper, before the township was entirely surveyed.

Free Grant Lands of Muskoka

A description of the district is given, under the headings – Situation, extent, climate, soil, timber, scenery, Muskoka Lake, the Muskoka River, Lake Rosseau, Lake Joseph, the crops, roads, progress. It refers to the building of the new steamer Nipissing. The Wenonah was already in service. Then, under Villages, comes an account of Bracebridge.

Bracebridge is the most important village in the district of Muskoka. It is situated south west of Macaulay, 11 miles north of Gravenhurst, on the north branch of the Muskoka River, at what is known as North Falls. When the writer first visited Muskoka in 1861, there was not a tree cut, nor a settler to be found on the present site. All was a dense forest. In fact, there was no road to it, and the only means of crossing the river, was by walking over a pine log, which spanned the stream. I can assure you this was dangerous. What a change has taken since then.

While I write, a hundred chimneys are sending forth their smoke, and scores of teams are driving past, giving evidence of activity and life. There are four large hotels, seven excellent stores, two saw mills, grist mill, two bakers, two butcher shops, two boot stores, carpenter shops, sash and door factory, blacksmiths' shops, cabinet warehouse, drug store, book store, Court House, Crown Lands Office, Registry Office, jail, printing office, churches, schools etc., Orange Hall, post office with daily mail, money order office, Post Office Savings Bank. Passengers can, during navigation, come through from Toronto in a day. Bracebridge is destined to become a town of great importance, situated as it is in the centre of the District, and surrounded by a rich farming country, with numberless avenues all leading directly to it, and being on the route of the Toronto, Simcoe and Muskoka Junction Railway. It cannot fail to keep the lead, as it has already taken it.

A short sketch of the rise and progress of the village of Gravenhurst is given.

A. P. Cockburn and Sons commenced lumbering operations in the country in the winter of 1865-66. This gave an impetus and advancement to an industry, previously unknown. They purchased logs from the settlers, and gave them employment during the winter months – soon convincing the inhabitants that pine trees were useful for other purposes than being burned into ashes. Mr. A. P. Cockburn, M.P.P., contributed to the welfare and progress of the settlement, by placing a steamer on the Muskoka Lake, known as the Wenonah, built near the Gravenhurst Wharf. He also opened a general store, distinguished as the “Montreal Store”. Since that, the country has steadily progressed.

Severn Bridge

This part of Morrison was first settled about 1858. ----- There is a good plank road, splendid water privileges, etc.

Washago

Here the steamboats land their freight and passengers. It contains a hotel and post office and saw mill. Many turned back on their arrival here, and it is not much to be wondered at, for the scene is anything but inviting. Rock is very prominent, but, I assure my readers, that, if they will penetrate the settlement, a more pleasing prospect will meet their view.

Huntsville

Huntsville Post Office opened in January, 1870. Two stores are now being built with excellent prospects. The Muskoka Road was extended a few months ago, and a very substantial bridge spans Lake Vernon. The land in the vicinity of these lakes, (Vernon, Fairy and Peninsula) is of a superior quality, and was cleared of its timber, and waving fields of grain, and the most abundant crops of potatoes, etc., amply reward the enterprising settlers for their toil.

Indians

Few Indians reside in the district, but many pass through on their way from Rama to their hunting grounds. They are quiet, inoffensive people, fond of jewellery and gaudy attire. They sing sweetly, and the squaws execute beautiful bead work. It is amusing to see them gliding along in their bark canoes. They are dying off very fast, and I fear will soon be extinct. Some of them live to a good old age.

Chief Yellowhead died in 1865 at aged 106 years. He was honest, respected by all who knew him, and continued to frequent his hunting grounds till a few days before his death. On his last trip, he called at the residence of the writer, and remained overnight.

What brought the writer to Muskoka?

The question has often been asked – what brought you to Canada, and how did you find out about Muskoka?

I have a large family. With our limited means, we saw no prospects of ever being able to procure a farm. So, the thought of emigrating, began to occupy our attention. In 1861, the Government sent Mr. J. A. Donaldson over to Great Britain and Ireland to make Canada known, and promote emigration to the Provinces. It was announced in the Belfast papers, that he was staying at the Plough Hotel, and would be glad to give advice to anyone desirous of emigrating to Canada. I waited for him, and received a pamphlet with map of Ontario, together with much valuable information. In looking over the map, I was favourably impressed with the position of Muskoka, its proximity to Toronto, and its unlimited water facilities. It led me to conclude, that if the soil was what the surveyors reported it to be, that eventually it must become a place of considerable importance.

On May 10th, 1861, we set sail from Londonderry, and arrived at Quebec on the 20th, a pleasant 10 day voyage.

On passing along the Grand Trunk, I was disheartened at the appearance of the country, but, as we neared Toronto, the scene improved, and I thought Canada was not so bad a place after all. On our arrival in Toronto, I rented a house for a month for my family while I proceeded to examine the Free Grant Lands of Muskoka. At Orillia, people dissuaded me from going there. One man said – If you go there, you will die, and there will be no one to bury you. I proceeded on my journey. On arriving at McCabe's Tavern where the village of Gravenhurst now stands, I hired a flat bottomed boat and rowed across Muskoka Lake and up Muskoka River, to the North Falls, now known as the village of Bracebridge.

Here, I was welcomed by Mr. James Cooper to whom I had a note of introduction from Mr. R. J. Oliver Esq. the Crown Lands Agent. After spending a night at the camp, near where the wharf now stands, I proceeded to Draper, and met with Mr. Richard Hanna, who was employed by the Government in opening up the Peterson Line. After examining the land, I selected 400 acres on the banks of the south branch of the Muskoka River, about two miles east of Muskoka Falls. I succeeded in getting Mr. Hanna to cut 10 acres of land, and build a log house, all of which he promised to have finished in a month. I then went back to Toronto for my family, and, at the expiration of the month, returned, expecting that my house would be finished. The frame was erected without floors and roof. We were obliged to make a shake-down, with nothing but the blue canopy of heaven for a covering. On retiring to rest, all was pleasant, but at midnight, the clouds began to gather, the lightning and thunder rolled in and rain descended in torrents. There we were – out in the wild woods, miles from human habitation. Moments of eternal duration passed away, and, at last the morning came, when we got changes from our chests, and a fire started. This was our introduction to backwoods life. The news soon spread that we had located at Draper Falls, and others soon followed.

The settlement has gone on increasing, until now the township is well settled by a loyal and industrious people. When the writer first located, he had to float over streams on rafts, and was obliged to go 35 miles to the mill; the nearest post office was 21 miles away, and was absent of stores, schools and churches all of which the settlers now possess in abundance. In fact, such has been the rapid growth and development of the district, that the writer could not imagine that half a century could possibly accomplish what has been achieved in a few years. It is astonishing how quickly the forests have been cleared.

Several things impressed me on my arrival in this country. First was the vast extent of Canada, the enormous area covered with woods and forests, its great lakes, and noble rivers. Another thing that struck my attention was the advancement made in Toronto to: buildings, business and beauty. I also noticed that while the birds here are decked in gaudier colours, than at home, they are deficient in song. The improved position of the labouring classes is also very striking. Working men are not only better paid here, but they have better fare; in this respect, they enjoy perfect equality with their employers, eating at the same table, and treated in every way as equals.

A home in the wild woods

We lost no time in taking advantage of the Free Grants of land. We have known some who, on their arrival, frittered away their means and time, in our cities and then, when their money was all gone, would move to the bush. Do not delay a day; remember, time is money, and you will need every penny you have to enable you to clear your farm, and to keep you until you raise some crops. On your arrival, procure lists of the unoccupied lots, and make a thorough examination of the land before locating. This is very important; your choice is for life; your success, otherwise depends to a great extent, on the choices you make. There is an abundance of good land to choose from. Some take almost the first lot they see, without proper examination, and, after a time, get discouraged. The plan is to take time in the first instance, and make a wise selection.

The following is from "Muskoka Settlers' Guide".

The class of settlers best adapted for the country, are strong, able men, who will not be discouraged, have vigour and courage to grapple with and overcome difficulties; men willing to live bare, work hard, and put up with many inconveniences for a few years. Nevertheless, it must be observed, there will be hardships encountered in this settlement. There is a good colonization road, mills and stores, and employment with good wages. These are great advantages; land to clear and fence, houses and barns to build and roads to make, and any one coming here, and expecting to find conveniences will be disappointed. Those willing to economize and work hard for a few years, may expect to see their labour crowned with success, and to obtain and enjoy all the comforts of life, in houses of their own.

Many have come with only a few dollars, and have got on wonderfully well. One requires something like \$500. which properly managed, will have every prospect of success. Many, however, have gone into the woods with only an axe, and the will to use it, and have been quite successful. In a new settlement, there are always persons willing to sell out, for the purpose of raising a little money, to enable them to make a better start on another lot. Generally, it will be best for those who have sufficient means, and not much experience, to buy a partly improved place. Lots with ten to twenty cleared acres may be worth \$300 to \$1000, according to quality of land, and situation. In some localities, lots with a few acres cleared, may be obtained for less.

Men considering coming to the bush should consider it before making the move. If they can do as well elsewhere, they should not come here. Or, similarly, those who can benefit themselves by leaving, should lose no time in doing so. There are some here, who should never have come in the first place. There are many who are not here, who should be here. Those who have land, and comfortable homes of their own, should stay where they are; but, there are many on small farms, rented farms or mortgaged farms, with families of boys growing up, who could secure homes both for themselves and their sons.

Strong men who work hard for themselves, will be independent. There are many able bodied men living in cities, paying high prices for provisions, house rent, and fire wood, and losing their health, will here get land they own for nothing, a house of their own, wood for the chopping and raise their own provisions. It is especially for the information of such that these facts are now stated, for, from enquiries, which have hitherto been made, it may fairly be inferred, that there are thousands who would willingly come here, if they thought that they could secure homes and make a living for themselves and families, but who either have not known of the country, or who have not known in what quarters to seek the information they desired.

The best months to look for land are May, August, September or October. In these months, the flies which are troublesome in June or July are avoided. To those without experience, it has often been said that they had better obtain employment on a new farm for a year or so at first, to learn the skills of Canadian farming. Many Two or three brothers may do well together, but, it seems never to answer for friends to join in partnership in clearing a

farm. Generally the parties are inexperienced – and the result is invariably a separation before long, with a state of accounts that is very difficult to adjust.

A new settler should be very careful to select the very best land for clearing, and to lay out his improvements systematically. It is during the first two or three years that he is in the most need for the very best return he can get from the land, and to economize his time and cultivate properly which he has. Appended will be found a statement of the route and cost of reaching here, and a short statement of the cost of articles necessary to be purchased.

In conclusion, it has been desired to abstain from using enticing language to induce settlers to come here. There seems to be a call for information respecting the country and it is the humble endeavor of this pamphlet partially to supply that want. We can only add that from our experience, those who come here, will find a country fit for habitation, civil, kind neighbours and a hearty welcome.

Free Grants of Land

Heads of families get a grant of 200 acres of land and each member of his family over 18 years of age, 100 acres; and if more is wanted, each settler can purchase 100 acres at 50 cents an acre, cash. The conditions are, reside on the lot for at least six months a year. 15 acres shall be cleared in five years. At the end of 5 years, the deed will be issued. The Homestead Law provides, that if the first settler or his heirs remain on the land, it cannot be seized for debt for 20 years. This Free Grant System has already proved a great stimulus to the settlement of the country, and I look for yet greater results.

Settlers

A better class of people never took possession of a new settlement, than the inhabitants of these districts. Here, you will find all classes, rich and poor, learned and unlearned, fired with the same zeal, and working for the same object, namely to prepare an independent home, and improve their circumstances. The nationality, as far as we can judge, is as follows; one third, Canadian, one third, Protestant Irish, one third, composed of English, Scotch and German.

Great credit is due to the first settlers. They had to endure many hardships and privations. Lumberers and steamboat owners have certainly done much for the country. But, the early pioneers deserve the credit.

I have spent hours listening with the deepest attention to those aged heroes, as they related the thrilling incidents connected with their early history. There is a wonderful pleasure in the realization of the fact, that, after years of weary toil, a competency has been acquired, and a comfortable home provided. We have seen a man stand in front of his mansion, and, gazing upon a country that was cleared for miles, and heard him exclaim with pride, “When I came to these parts, there was not a tree cut, nor a settler within 20 miles of me”. What a change has taken place. The woodsman’s axe has been at work, and now you gaze upon a landscape of surpassing beauty. Numerous farmhouses appear in giving evidence of comfort and prosperity; herds of cattle are grazing upon the pasture lands, orchards are laden with the choicest fruits, and fields of golden grain are waving in the breeze, where, a few years ago, the foot of white man never trod.

Settlement in 1871 is easy work compared with what it was in the early history of the province. Now, we have the colonization roads running through the centre of our Free Grant Territory, so that settlers can easily, cheaply and quickly make their way to their new homes. Then, it was no rare thing to have to go 40 miles with a bushel

of wheat to the mill, and take the flour home again. Some now living in splendid houses and own magnificent farms, walked over 40 miles for their first bushel of seed potatoes.

First Newspaper

The Northern Advocate was first published by the author on September 14, 1869. It was first printed in Parry Sound, and then located to Bracebridge because it was more centrally located. The circulation is 1000 copies weekly. Copies of the Northern Advocate go to England, Ireland and Scotland for intending emigrants. Through its advocacy, many have been induced to settle in our midst.

It is somewhat singular, that when the writer first came to Muskoka, he had to row across Muskoka Lake, and, when the first issue of the Northern Advocate was published, it so happened that the steamer was under repairs, and he had to row 16 miles across the same water, in order to deliver the first number.

MUSKOKA MEMORIES

Ann Hathaway – 1904. Born 1849

Father sailed from Liverpool in 1870, for New York – but, intending to visit Canada – did not decide on a particular spot in which to settle.

Family sailed in March, 1871 – came to Toronto. Father went to Muskoka in 1872 – cleared land on Lake Joseph. Family joined him about six years later, for permanent residence, and “hotel” on Hathaway’s Bay.

The Muskoka settlers are mostly respectable English and Scotch families, who have come out to this country as my father did, in order to escape from the high rents, and unjust restrictions of the “old land”, and to endeavor to make homes for themselves, and earn a decent living in the new. I am only too well aware that many of the older ones, nay, nearly all of them, have suffered severe hardships, toiled without ceasing, born the heat and burden of the day without complaint. But, what matters that if, blest with contentment and good health, their homes and land are their own: every hour they spend in labor, every dollar they lay out, goes towards the improvement of their own homes, and not into a landlord’s pocket.

THE ALGONQUIN STORY

Audrey Saunders

Alexander Sherriff took a trip through the district in 1829. Independent traders travelled all through the Muskoka Lakes from about 1825. Lake of Bays became so well known as a fur trading centre that it was called Trading Lake, and some of these traders set up posts in the area.

A later development came with the opening up of a Hudson's Bay post at Orillia in the 1800's. The Ojibway Indians, who had their headquarters at Lake Couchiching, brought their furs from the Oxtongue district in the southwest corner of the Park, right down to the post. As an offshoot of the Orillia trading house, and, as a way of intercepting some of the free traders who still came to Lake of Bays from the Georgian Bay coast, Mr. Thomas Goffatt, set up an outpost on Bigwin Island.

Sherriff and his men lost their way and met Indians who told them of the Muskoka route through to Georgian Bay. He had just come back along that route himself. In doing this, he must have passed right through the territory controlled by Muskeekie, also called Yellowhead, the Ojibway Chief, who regarded Lake of Bays as exclusive Ojibway hunting grounds. The name Muskoka comes from the name of this Indian leader.

David Thompson, with Taylor (David), led survey parties of the district in 1837. Lake of Bays was called Forked Lake on his map, Thompson travelled up the Muskoka River to Oxtongue Lake.

David Thompson did four beautifully drawn maps of the region through which he had travelled in his cross country trip from Penetanguishene to Ottawa. To geographers, these maps are of great importance, since they provide the first accurate picture of the entire system now known as the Muskoka Lakes. These maps were drawn on paper and mounted on linen backing. They are still in excellent condition.

Trapping

Among trappers, there was a friendly arrangement of each other's own private trapping reserve. Before Algonquin Park was set up in 1893, the whole district was divided up in this way among the families in the Lake of Bays and the Haliburton regions. White trappers took over the Indian hunting grounds, and the area yielded a rich harvest.

Early in the fall, they went north to their trap lines, and again before freeze-up. The men from Dorset including Tom Salmon and Sam Vanclieaf come down through Lake St. Nora and Kushog Lake by canoe. The Maple Lake families usually tote their pelts on their backs, along the section of the Peterson Road that led to the village of Haliburton. There sold their furs, and spend the proceeds on necessities for the coming winter.

The Father of Archie McEachern of Dorset was employed by the Gilmour Company. Gilmour planned to float logs down the Oxtongue River from Canoe Lake to Lake of Bays. Logs were made into booms, and dragged by means of the steam alligator to Baysville, the starting point of the haul over the height of land. The old stone pump house, situated about a mile from Dorset, on the road to Baysville, marks the spot, where an endless chain, designed to do the job, was to start.

The problem was how to transport the logs out of Algonquin Park district. Supplies were brought to Dorset along the Bobcaygeon Road by wagon or sleigh. It was a long haul to Tea Lake. There was no road until Gilmour's built one.

Jim Campbell, who travelled this road in Gilmour's time and afterwards when it was used by Shier and Mickle-Dyment, has stories of the stopping places on this road, at the upper end of Fletcher Lake, where one could get a meal at "The Pig's Ear". Ten miles farther on was a log house and a barn capable of putting up 15 teams of horses for the night – "The Dart's Den".

In 1895, spring came early and the drive began. There are people still living in the Dorset and Haliburton area who remember that drive. Tommy Archer is one of them. A thousand men were employed in the construction of the intricate system of dams, troughs, pumps and chains financed by the Gilmour's. Logs went down the Oxtongue and then up over the endless chains into the Trent system.

It worked, except for one miscalculation. By the time the logs had finished their long, rough trip, many months had passed. When they reached the Company's mill at Trenton, ready to be cut into lumber, even the finest timber had begun to deteriorate. .

The idea of Algonquin Park was borne and developed in the brain of Alexander Kirkwood, a clerk in the office of the Ontario Department of Crown Lands. Kirkwood never set eyes on Algonquin Park. One problem came to obsess him. If the height of land could not be opened for settlement, what useful purpose could it serve? The answer was conservation.

Kirkwood suggested that within this region, it should be unlawful to disturb or destroy any fur bearing animals and the timber should be cut and marketed by the Government, rather than by private companies.

The author of the Park idea recommended that the name of the proposed area be adopted from "one of the greatest of Indian Nations" – the Algonquin's.

The Algonquin Park Act was passed by the Legislative Assembly of the Province of Ontario in 1893. Alexander Kirkwood's dream finally became a reality.

Tom Salmon was an old time Lake of Bays trapper and snow shoe expert. He was commissioned to make snow shoes for Arctic expeditions. As a fly fisherman, he was looked upon as a top ranking expert by rangers and Algonquin Park visitors alike.

ENGLISH BLOOD

Roger Vardon 1930

Graphic Publishers Limited – Ottawa, Canada

Retired army officer, offered, through letter to his guardian in England – to take Roger Vardon as a farm pupil at a premium of 100 pounds per annum for three years. Came to Canada, May, 1878

Stayed at the “Rossin House” in Toronto”, one of the finest hotels in the Province.

Boarded train for Gravenhurst. Met a Mr. Wardle on the train. Insisted he get off in Gravenhurst, and drive to his house, three miles out of Bracebridge, and stay the night. He would drive him to his destination. However, Roger Vardon elected to travel from Gravenhurst to Bracebridge by water. Went to British Lions Hotel, ate and then walked to Mr. Wardle’s.

Bracebridge then had a population of 1200.

They left by wagon drawn by oxen, passed through Utterson, a small hamlet containing a hotel, and two or three cottages. Left Mr. Wardle and son and wagon on the Stisted road and walked the last 6 miles to Captain Martin’s domicile by a lake with two log shanties on three acres cleared, filled with blackened logs, burnt branches and boulders. There was no arable land and two logs buildings plastered with mud and manure.

Captain and Mrs. Martin, a gentleman named Melius, and two Englishmen who had come to learn farming – Mr. Barrett, a Cambridge graduate and Mr Harkness.

Logging up – clearing land – 1. underbrushing 2. cutting down heavy trees 3. burning off of fallow in the Spring 4. rolling up logs in big piles and burning them... The land is then ready for the first crop. The stumps remain in the ground. Only after seven or eight years do they become sufficiently decayed to allow of their being pulled out by horse or oxen.

Song sung at “Bee”

Our shanty’s in Muskoka, and you will find us there
Some lives in holes what’s underground, some’s h’ open to the h’air
We ain’t what’s called the big bug class, that’s plainly for to see
But we’s here to sow and reap or hoe, and make a great countree.

To go to cricket game in Huntsville, one had to paddle two miles down Fox Lake to Port Vernon, ½ mile portage to Lake Vernon. Port Vernon, at that time was a thriving little village, 2 or 3 stores, 2 churches, a saw mill, 12 or 14 houses, and a hotel. Captain Charles Hood was the presiding founder of the place.

On his arrival in the district, he had seen the possibility presented by the site, and promptly purchased a block of land, with the object of turning it into village lots. Rumours of the railway passing through, brought others to the place, and soon a small hamlet came into being. Although surveyors ran a line through the property, the railway never came. It passed through Huntsville, and the changed route sounded the death knell of the budding village.

Today, there is no sign of a building ever being there. Every vestige has been swept away, and the bridge alone remains to show that at one time, there was considerable traffic in the neighbourhood.

It would be hard for any but those who knew the village in the old days to realize that if the railway authorities had chosen the route through Port Vernon, it would today be an important centre, transcending Huntsville in importance.

One of the things that struck us as remarkable was the lack of interest which the average farmer evinced in the affairs of the outside world. The men who subscribed to a weekly newspaper, and read its news avidly, were few and far between. As for the majority, their idea of what the world afforded in the way of relaxation, consisted of sitting with their pipes in their mouths, gazing out at the landscape or idly whittling a stick for hours. There were very few illiterates in the district, but men would simply not lend their minds to such an occupation as reading, when the day offered them the chance of sitting down and doing nothing. Sunday observance was fairly rigidly adhered to, in fact, a great deal more than in many districts nearer to civilization. It was so hard to get to a regular church service that, when the opportunity arose of hearing a clergyman or minister of any of the denominations, people would travel miles to be present.

I know families who travel ten miles over execrable roads to listen to words from strangers. When our own minister came as a resident clergyman, people flocked from far and near to hear him, with the exception of the Roman Catholics, who had a regular service from their own priest, and some misguided individuals who preferred to be bawled at by a man who professed to be a descendant of John the Baptist, and immersed adherents in a muddy little stream near his dwelling.

There were two local preachers who aspired to do some spiritual work, but their value to the community was shorn of much value, by the fact that one was discovered to be a convicted thief, and the other was living with someone who was not his wife.

But, of the regularly ordained ministers who laboured in the district, nothing too complimentary can be said. They visited and preached in true earnestness. I am referring now to the clergymen of the Anglican denomination, but the same tale could have been told of all others.

I can recall the Reverend William Crompton of Aspdin, Reverend Lawrence Sinclair, Reverend William Chown of Rosseau, and Canon Llwyd of Huntsville. Of these, the Rev. Lawrence Sinclair is the sole survivor.

Arrangements had been made that we should take up free grants of land around the lake, as soon as we had completed our novitiate.

We knew there were no fortunes to be made in the district. Mr. Barrett declared he liked the country so much he was going to build a shanty on his own place in the spring. Mr. Melius also announced his intentions of doing the same thing. They both hoped that the prospects would brighten when the railway came through Hoodstown.

None of us are wealthy, and most of us are dependent on remittances from home. There are plenty more like ourselves scattered throughout the district and Canada. Much as we plumed ourselves on being pioneers, the reality was that we were only such in the sense of living in the district, and undergoing many of the discomforts of a settler's existence. We were very far removed indeed from experiencing the true exigencies of pioneer life. We felt the same cold, and the same heat, and we entered very thoroughly into the settler's work, but, we were always assured of three good meals a day, and thus escaped the privations and anxieties that were the too common lot of those about us.

In a sense, we were playing at pioneering, because, whatever we did, never carried us any farther along the road to prosperity. But, we did our share in contributing an appreciable amount towards the prosperity of our fellowman, and providing a never ending fund of amusement and hilarity.

It was only after we had been here a considerable length of time that we realized what ordinary beings we are and how much, the grit and determination of those poorer than ourselves were to be admired. We discovered a great deal that was ludicrous, a great deal that was deplorable, but, even in the most flagrant cases of depravity, the central factor of unyielding grit was very observable. I often wonder when Governments and communities erect monuments to heroes; they forget to erect one to the honour the pioneer. This grand and glorious country was raised to its greatness by lowly efforts.

Tales of endurance and hardship are borne uncomplainingly in the spirits of those buried in neglected graves, on bleak hillsides of in lowly valleys. Heroes and heroines, they were indeed waging a war against an inflexible and devastating fate. They fought their fight, and died. Today on flourishing farm, descendants are living in comfort.

Towards the end of our pupilage, preparations were made for placing us on the free grants of land obtained from the Government. A contract was given to settlers to clear off two acres of land, fence it and make it ready for a crop at the munificent rate of \$16 an acre.

Captain Martin was not the only person in our district who attempted to make a living by teaching Englishmen the rudiments of farming. I can call to mind at least ten others who were engaged in the same occupation.

One gentleman advertised his specialty of dairy farming. One who had come to be taught, told me that the dairy farm consisted of one cow, grazing in about five acres of land, and that the dairy was a root house, one end of which was filled with a miscellaneous supply of potatoes, and the other half, by one or two shelves, for standing the pans of milk on. For this magnificent method of teaching, he was asked to pay 100 pounds per annum. He stayed a month, and took passage back to England.

It is hard to say how many young fellows came to our colony. It must not be inferred that they all came to Captain Martin. He was responsible for about six or seven. The others followed, owing to being friends of those who came before them. These took up land, entirely on their own responsibility.

When we left Captain Martin to enter upon our own lots as farmers, we were about as well equipped for practising husbandry, as when we first came to the country. In this, we were on a par with the other residents around the lake.

Captain Martin left the district three or four years after we got the land planted up. He may have imagined that he had done all he said he would do. He had laid the foundations of a settlement, and located us on free grant lands, all according to specifications. But, he would never have induced any of us to come to the country, if he had not dangled the bait of agricultural plenty before our eyes and expatiated on the glorious possibilities of the district. That experience inspired the careers of most of us. We spent 9 or 10 years of the most valuable period of our lives wrestling with the timber, and undergoing many of the drawbacks, inseparable from a settler's existence in a new country.

The experience taught us one thing, and that was the magnitude of the difficulties that confront the pioneer.

The lot of the backwoodsman is a hard one. His surroundings makes him often uncouth – often, worse than uncouth. But, like the soldier in the front trenches, he is fighting in the van, and, the man who fights in the van, is the man to be admired.

Many left the district. The little stone church, which took the place of the old wooden structure, still stands. Memorial windows, most given by tourists, in only two instances were names to be seen commemorating those who had been among the earliest of its founders.

The eight miles of road, leading from the railway station to the lake were rockier and wilder than ever.

HISTORY OF MUSKOKA

Captain L. R. Fraser

Preface

History has never been kind to the common man. It is written in terms of war, political intrigue, racial problems and constitutional changes. The true history of a country lies in the forgotten stories of the foresight, courage and tenacity that our pioneer men and women who developed the country. This is particularly true of the District of Muskoka.

Such men as A. P. Cockburn, Captain Marsh, J. D. Shier, Charles O. Shaw, Rev. Lawrence Sinclair and Thomas McMurray (who gave Muskoka its first newspaper), are captains of industry, leaders of thought and religious teaching which gave leadership, courage and poise in Muskoka pioneer days.

My sixty years in Muskoka, spent on the farm, steam boating and lumbering, my municipal service, is contemporary evidence of the contents of the following pages, which I trust will be of interest to many who have shared in the development of Muskoka.

Chapter 1

Until about the middle of the nineteenth century, Muskoka might well be considered a "No man's land", abounding in game, and fur-bearing animals, a hunting ground of roving Indians, a land of innumerable lakes, dense forest and natural beauty, awaiting the coming of the white man.

Samuel de Champlain passed through Muskoka early in the 17th century, but there is no record of his having discovered any of the Muskoka Lakes. The history of Muskoka extends back to only fifteen years before Confederation.

The boundaries on Muskoka are on the east Bobcaygeon Road (boundary of Victoria and Haliburton): west Georgian Bay: south the Severn River and north the Townships of Sinclair, Chaffey, Stisted and Cardwell. The town of Bracebridge is the District seat or capital.

Muskoka could not, by any stretch of the imagination be considered an agricultural district, but, its natural condition was adaptable to several diverse occupations.

The Government of the day considered two opinions for Muskoka: either open it up for settlement or establish it as a permanent Indian reservation. There were several Indian villages scattered between the Severn River and Lake Nipissing. The Indian population of Muskoka and Parry Sound at the beginning of the 17th century was probably as great as the present day (1945) population. The Hurons alone numbered 20,000 according to the Jesuit census of the day. There were several tribes, namely the Mohawks, Algonquins, Iroquois and Nipissings. The Iroquois, most powerful of all the tribes, and most war like, as time went on, almost exterminated the Hurons, and the other weaker tribes.

According to a tale published in "All the Year Round", widely circulated in Britain, Muskoka was named after an Indian doctor, "Misquadee", meaning "Clear Sky Land". But, a later historian, Hamilton, in his history of early life in Muskoka, claims that this is an erroneous derivation, and that Muskoka takes its name from the great chief of the Rama Indians, Mesque Ukee, who fought side by side with the British, and was awarded the silver medal with the image of King George, after the war of 1812. Mesque Ukee's territory was at first the South Branch of the

Muskoka River. There is evidence that an Indian village of considerable size existed in the vicinity of the corner of the four townships of Draper, Oakley, Macaulay and Mclean. This village belonged to the Mohawk tribe, but, long before the 19th century, this tribe was driven away, and the village destroyed. Mesqua Ukee's territory extended to Lake of Bays, or Trading Lake. Bigwin Island in Lake of Bays was for many years, occupied by Indians as a council area and trading post. Here, various chiefs of friendly tribes, met in conclave. This village must have existed for a long time, as an old cemetery was discovered with at least thirty graves.

Ultimately, Mesqua Ukee's authority was recognized over the whole of Muskoka, and the district was named after this great warrior, who held sway until Muskoka was opened for location.

In 1859 it was decided to open up Muskoka for location. An office was opened at Severn Bridge, with Mr. R. J. Oliver in charge. The Government built a road from Washago to South Fall. In 1860, the township of Morrison, Muskoka, Draper and Macaulay were offered for location, but, the rush for Muskoka lands did not begin until the enactment of the Free Grants and Homestead Act of 1868.

A village site was located and surveyed at South Galls, which, at that time, was considered the logical spot for a town. However, navigation proved the determining factor in the location of Muskoka's villages and towns, and, when the first steamboat whistle was heard at North Falls, (Bracebridge) in 1866, South Falls dream of greatness faded away. In pre-navigation days, South Falls was an important centre. Here, Bracebridge, Uffington, and the surrounding country received their mail. In the village, there was a tavern, a post office, a store, a black-smith shop, a church and a school house, together with a number of dwelling houses of substantial quality.

There is considerable good farming land adjacent to Muskoka Falls, as it is now called and the river, which a century ago, was the hunting, fishing and trapping grounds of the roving Indians, is fast developing a tourist resort. The development of power, at this point, has made secure the future of Muskoka Falls village.

It became evident that agriculture alone could not maintain the rapidly increasing population. Muskoka was one vast forest of pine, hemlock, spruce and hardwood of every species. Lumbermen soon began to study its possibilities, and were satisfied that no finer pine forests could be found in all Ontario. Pine, at that time, was the only species taken by the lumber companies, and, it alone was reserved by the Crown; all other timbers belonged to the settler, according to the Free Grants Act. The district was laid out in timber berths, and sold to the lumber companies. In an incredibly short time, lumbering was being actively carried on, in nearly every township in the district. As a stimulus to the settlement of Muskoka, lumbering was a prime factor, providing employment during the winter months, and a market for all kinds of farm produce, and, for over half a century lumbering played a major part in the development of Muskoka.

Muskoka is a land of many lakes, some of which are large and joined together by navigable waters, (Muskoka, Rosseau and Joseph) – forming a natural highway into the very heart of the district, even to the border of Parry Sound district. So, when the road that was built from Washago to South Falls in 1861 – 1862, reached McCabe's Bay (now Gravenhurst) a water highway was already prepared by Nature, which could be of great service. All that was required were steamboats to facilitate the movement of passengers and freight.

Mr. A. P. Cockburn, merchant and Reeve of the township of Eldon, in Victoria County, had been for some time, watching with interest, the development of the neighbouring district of Muskoka.

During the Autumn of 1865, Mr. Cockburn made an examination of Muskoka, with an eye to transportation. He sent a report to the Minister of Agriculture suggesting that if the Government would promise to do certain road work, and other improvements, The locks at Port Carling put a steamer on the lakes to facilitate settlement.

In 1866, the Wenonah made her first trip to North Falls (Bracebridge). This was followed in 1869 by the Waubamic, in 1871 by the Nipissing and in 1876 by the Simcoe. Before 1914, there were ten steamers plying the waters.

In the early stages of navigation on the Muskoka Lakes, a trip from Toronto to Huntsville would be made as follows; by train to Belle Ewart, by boat over Lake Simcoe and Lake Couchiching to Washago, by stage to McCabe's Bay, by steamer to North Falls, by stage to Port Sydney, and then by steamer over Mary Lake, Fairy Lake and Muskoka River to Huntsville. All traffic north, moved by stage. The time required to take such a trip, would not be less than three days.

In the early 1860's, lumber companies were making their way into sections of Muskoka – Belle Ewart, Christie Kerr Co., Strickland's, Dodge Co., and several others. In 1880's and 1890's, there were a number of lumbering companies operating including: Crossfield's, Cockburn's, Mickle Dymont and Son, J. D. Shier, McPherson and Co., J. H. Hull, Gilmore Company, Thompson and Baker.. In 1877, Beardmore Brothers of Toronto built a tannery in Bracebridge. The result was the development of a village of several hundred people.

In 1877, Huntsville Forester began publication. There was a rush of settlers when 40,000 acres were opened for settlement through the Bracebridge office alone. In 1878, navigation started on the Lake of Bays.

Franklin Township opened for settlement in 1877. By 1878, nearly every township in the district was being served by steamboats on one route or another and all roads, in those days, led to the nearest landings, steamboats and lumbering were sufficient to serve the needs of the settlers, while the foundation was being laid for Muskoka's permanent industry, the tourist trade, which was increasing rapidly, even at that early date – 1878.

One glance at the map of Muskoka shows what the development of navigation meant to the sparsely settled district.

Chapter II

There were many people who claimed Muskoka should never have been opened for settlement – because the land was unsuitable for farming, the flies were vicious and the temperatures were so severe. But, the energetic people who came to Muskoka in its early stages of development were not faint of heart. They were men and women of superb courage – who were not afraid to face the privations and discouragements of pioneer life. Their only desire was to better their condition in life, and to make provision for their families. Muskoka was indeed fortunate that the majority of settlers came from Britain as well as Germany, and Scandinavia.

Conditions in the British Isles at this time were not promising from the point of view of the working classes and the farmers. There was little chance of their ever owning a piece of land, (one of the most cherished desires of the British race). So, it was a wonderment when headlines in the British press advertised that in Canada, one could get a free grant of one hundred (100) acres of land. They came, rich and poor, learned and unlearned, some for adventure, but the great majority to make homes for themselves. Many of the new arrivals were young, prolific men of every trade and calling.

From the earliest days of the District's settlement, there were those who could see eminent possibilities in the scenic grandeur of Muskoka, and who were courageously working toward attracting wealthy tourists to this wonderful lakeland.

The first people to open up their homes for tourism were A. P. Cockburn of Gravenhurst, Edward Prouse and J. H. Willmot of Beaumaris, Captain George Hunt, the founder of Huntsville, Captain Marsh, who established the

Huntsville and Lake of Bays Navigation Co., the Reverend Rowland Hill, who founded the Hillside settlement, Captain Robson, the Langford's of Dorset, the Gouldie's and Corbett's of Dwight, and Charles O. Shaw of Huntsville.

Transportation was a great incentive to settlement. The colonization road in Muskoka began in 1860 at Severn Bridge in Morrison Township, and that Township was the first to be settled. Small steamboats operated on the river. The Peterson Road, a military highway, built in 1812 – 1815, crossed from east to west, from Kingston to Georgian Bay, crossing the colonization road near Muskoka Falls.

The Bobcaygeon Road, one of the finest roads to be built in or near Muskoka formed the boundary line between Muskoka and Victoria and Haliburton. It was never of any great importance as a colonization road as from Hindon Hill, 10 miles east of Minden, there was practically no settlement on either side, until Dorset was reached, except one small settlement in the north east corner of Hindon Township. Dorset became known far and wide because of lumbering, and grew to be a smart little village. It boasted three large general stores, post office, several churches, and two or more hotels.

Chapter 3

Every newspaper published in Muskoka in 1874, or later, is still going strong.

1870 - The Northern Advocate – moved from Parry Sound to Bracebridge.
Thomas McMurray, publisher, Mr. James Boyer (father of G. W. Boyer) editor

1872 Free Grant Gazette – Mr. E. F. Stephenson

1872 The Liberal – in Huntsville, started by Mr. Stephenson, edited by Dr. Howland.
It was printed in Bracebridge, but, after a while was discontinued.
In 1877, the Huntsville Forester made its appearance.

1878 The Muskoka Herald, Bracebridge, from 1886 until 1934. Muskoka was Tory – only one Liberal M.P.P. – the late Dr. Bridgland

1880's Dr. Bastedo purchased the Muskoka Herald

1906 The Gazette was sold to Messrs. G. H. O. Thomas and Harry Linney. A short time later, Mr. Thomas bought Mr. Linney's interest.

As early as 1878, Gravenhurst had a population of 1200. It was six years before Bracebridge could boast that number.

In the 1850's, William Cann of Orillia came to Muskoka to hunt and camp. He built a crude log shanty on the river near where the swing bridge in Huntsville spans the stream. His was the first building erected in what is now the modern town of Huntsville.

Captain George Hunt came from Montreal in 1869. The colonization road had not reached Huntsville, but ended three miles away. Not being satisfied with the land at the end of the road, he pushed on until he reached the river, where the swing bridge now stands. To Captain Hunt, this looked like a strategic spot to build a house, and found

a community. A few weeks later, when his little home was ready for occupation, he was joined by his wife and three young daughters. This family of five, with two other men who were assisting Captain Hunt, were the only actual settlers during the first winter. The following spring saw new arrivals. Through the influence of Captain Hunt, the colonization road was completed to Huntsville.

Captain Hunt promoted the welfare of the community. As early as 1870, settlers began to pour in, and, in the same year, the first hotel was built by William Cann, on the site of the Kent House, where it stood for nearly a quarter of a century, until the great fire of 1894. Mr. L. E. Kinton was among the first businessmen to settle in the new community, and, when the village was incorporated, he became Huntsville's first reeve. Dr. F. L. Howland, Huntsville's first doctor, arrived in 1875. The road from Bracebridge had to be improved and locks had to be built, in order to connect Port Sydney and Huntsville by navigation.

The railroad from Gravenhurst would be extended north to serve the needs of the country. The Huntsville men fought well for the rights, and the railway was built in 1886 via Huntsville, during the year of its incorporation as a village.

Following incorporation, there was a considerable industrial boom. Heath, Tait and Turnbull, Huntsville Lumber Co. and John Whitesides all erected sawmills. In 1870, J. Stephenson and Son, built the first lumber mill and later John McConachie built a shingle mill. These two mills proved a great boon – providing material for the expanding building trade. In 1891, Shaw, Cassels and Co tanning plant was established under the management of W. S. Shaw. In 1894, almost the entire business section was wiped out by fire. In 1916 – Hydro power from South Falls reached Huntsville. In 1921, Muskoka Wood Manufacturing Company, whose plant was destroyed by fire, erected a larger and more modern plant.

In the early days, Captains Denton and Marsh established steamboat lines on the Huntsville waters and Lake of Bays for the tourist trade. For many years the colonization and industry taxed marine equipment. The boats kept going night and day to meet local demand. However as years went by, the lumber trade declined in favour of tourism which was a more permanent industry for which these beautiful lakes was intended. Provisions had to be made to meet the growing demands of the tourist trade. Captain Marsh purchased the Denton interests, and established a system of navigation over the whole lake region from Huntsville to Dorset. He started building larger, better and faster boats. By the close of the century, Huntsville was being well served by navigation from Lake of Bays, Mary, Peninsula, Fairy and Vernon Lakes.

In 1903, both the Portage Railway and the Algonquin at South Portage connected Peninsula Lake and Lake of Bays. Captain Marsh died in 1904. Sensing the tourist possibilities of the Huntsville and Lake of Bays chain, Mr. Charles O. Shaw purchased the navigation system. Few men in Muskoka created as much employment or contributed as much to the development of the district as Charles O. Shaw. In the late 1880's, his company erected a large tannery at Bracebridge, and in 1891, a much larger tannery in Huntsville. In 1945 the Anglo Canadian Leather Company was recognized as the largest sole leather tannery in the British Empire. Mr. Shaw set about developing the navigation interests as his own. The Algonquin was taken over the portage to the Huntsville waters, and, the up-to-date Iroquois was built for the Lake of Bays trade. The Mohawk Belle, a 100 foot steamer, was also put on the Lake of Bays. For well into the 1930's, those two fine vessels were operating at capacity loads. In 1921, Bigwin Inn on Lake of Bays opened for business. The construction of the extensive building – or collection of buildings, was started ten years earlier, but slowed down during World War 1.

Chapter 4

Mr. John McKee, was Vice President and general superintendent of all construction work at Bigwin Inn. Mr. McKee came to the Island in 1911, and for years was associated with the late Charles O. Shaw in planning and building the Inn. During the period of construction, he was in full charge, ably assisting the architect, John Wilson of Collingwood.

In 1869, the Rev. Rowland Hill (Methodist) from York County, settled in Franklin Township, the first settler east of Huntsville. He secured 700, acres of land, and founded the Hillside settlement.

Through his interest, the Vernon Mission was established, with himself as its first superintendent. In 1893, the Hillside Church was erected, and it stands as a monument to Mr. Hill's labours. The Hill family were prominent in the development of agriculture and the tourist trade. They have also been for a number of years active in the promotion of winter sports, with the result that Limberlost and Camp Billie Bear are now open the year round, for the accommodation of guests.

The beautiful Naiad – that passed through Bracebridge last winter on its way to the Lake of Bays, had been on the lakes for a number of years. In 1893, it was the first high class tourist boat to reach the Muskoka Lakes. Nearly every boat had a Captain and an engineer in uniform, and, those jobs were considered plums for any fortunate enough to secure one.

Chapter 5

My first charge as master of a steamboat was in 1896, when I was 23 years old.

Bracebridge was the jumping off place and the supply depot for the North country. People were going up to Falkenburg, Utterson, Port Sydney, and Huntsville, where a group of settlers were making a heroic effort to establish a village. Through Bracebridge, they went on to Baysville and Lake of Bays. Soon, their money and produce was returning in exchange for Bracebridge's flour and feed, groceries, whiskey, woollens.

In 1861, the year in which Macaulay Township was opened for location, there were three squatters, John Beal, David Leith, and James Cooper at North Falls.

Dr. Bridgland arrived in Bracebridge in or about 1868. The British Lion Hotel was built in 1870. G. H. O. Thomas came to Bracebridge in 1884, as assistant principal in the public school. Alex C. Salmon became town clerk in 1889, continuing in office for 47 years.

Chapter 7

The settlement of Port Sydney began in 1869. In 1878, the Northern, an eighty foot vessel was launched. It transported two hundred passengers to Mary Lake to the music of a pipe and drum band. Captain Denton was owner and master of the Northern.

Chapter 8

Matthiasville – Alex McKay was one of the early pioneers. He too raised a large family. A few years later, this family moved to Purbrook, where they became best known. The boys became Shanty and river foremen, and mill owners. McKay's Lake, on the Fraserburg road was named after this family. Alex was in charge of the Hydro dam near Dorset, the only one left in Muskoka.

Chapter 12

Ridout Township, named for the Hon. Thomas Ridout, surveyor general of Upper Canada.

Franklin – was named after Sir John Franklin, the Arctic explorer.

The Caverly Stages

The Daily Mail and Express stage leaves Bracebridge at 8 a.m. every day and arrives at Huntsville at 4 p.m.

Schools had to be provided; religion was not to be forgotten, so churches were needed. As early as 1876, when the new Presbyterian Church in Bracebridge was opened, the Reverend A. Findlay, the pastor (stipend - \$700) was in charge of 33 preaching stations which he visited twice a year. Data is not available on the number of other places of worship, in charge of ministers of other denominations, but, no doubt there were many. There was close co-operation between the ministers of the various religious bodies. In Muskoka, Catholic priests learned a few Protestant prayers, so as to be able to comfort a sick or dying settler, when no Protestant minister was available. In return, the Protestant ministers learned the proper system of administering the last rites of the Catholic Church, should an emergency arise. I cannot vouch for the accuracy of the above, but, it was co-operation in every phase of life that made living possible; those who “had”, shared with those who “had not” in Muskoka’s early days.

During the 1880’s and 1890’s, there was an enormous amount of traffic over this road. The Gilmore Brothers had mills at Trenton and Canoe Lake, about 25 or 30 miles east of Dorset. Their logs had to be driven to Trenton. In order to drive to Trenton, they had to be driven down the Oxtongue River, 20 miles or more, into the Lake of Bays, near Dwight, then towed 20 miles to Dorset. From there, they had to be taken to Raven Lake, which is high above the level of the Lake of Bays, and to accomplish this seemingly almost impossible task, the most spectacular undertaking ever carried on in Muskoka, was successfully operated within a couple of miles of Dorset. Here, an overland tramway slide a half a mile long was constructed. The logs went up and endless chains into the tramway. Powerful pumps forced sufficient water in the slide to float the logs through the tramway. A chain lifted the logs over a huge dam into Raven Lake and then downstream to Trenton.

Below Raven Lake, the Black River was dammed, and the water diverted into an artificial river, a distance of a couple of miles, through a swamp, and down a ravine to Lake St. Nora on the Trent water system. The damming of the Black River flooded the Bobcaygeon Road, for the full length of the Township, and a new road had to be built through the full length of the Township of Ridout. This road was known as the Gilmore Road, part of which is still in use today. Gilmore spent one million dollars to construct these operations, and, by the end of two years, when the first drive reached Trenton, the Gilmore brothers realized it was not a paying proposition. Mills were built at Canoe Lake and the Canada Atlantic Railway from Ottawa to Depot Harbour was being built, and, a station was erected at Canoe Lake, where forty miles of track were laid in the Gilmore Lumber yards. For a number of years, the company carried on extensive bush and mill operations, and, as a result of these, and other company logging operations, Dorset became known far and wide, and grew to be a smart little village.

Dan McIlroy kept the largest hotel, and did a bustling business. Dan was one of the most popular hotel proprietors in Ontario.

George Thomas came to Bracebridge, around 20 years of age, to fill a vacancy as a teacher for six months. The country looked so forbidding to him, that he wondered if he could endure it. Before the six months expired, in 1885 he became engaged as principal for the following year, a position he held for many years. He started a

jewellery business, married, and of his three sons, one is an optometrist, the other two studied law, and now are partners in law practice. The eldest is a magistrate, and editor of the Bracebridge Gazette).

D. E. Bastedo came from Baysville to Bracebridge in 1870, on foot, with his meagre belongings tied in a coloured handkerchief, accepted the position of printer's devil, on the Northern Advocate, and, later was on the Grant Gazette. He married, and raised a family of five boys; three are lawyers, one, a high school teacher, and one a doctor – Dr. A. F. Bastedo of Bracebridge.

1873

James William Dunn	April
James Cooper Jr.	May
John Wattie	August
Stephen Newman	December
Samuel Ware	December
George Frances Marsh	August

Brunel Township

<u>Thomas Salmon</u> – late of England, Gentleman	Bracebridge November 12, 1870	Lot 10	Con. 4
<u>Peter Worden</u> – Brantford	July 1869	Lot 6	Con. 5
<u>Robert Dollar</u> – Macaulay, Lumberman 36yrs	August 1875	Lot 6	Con. 5
<u>David Ferguson</u> – Twp. York Yeoman 6 sons	November 1870	Lot 11 Lot 12	Con. 6 Con. 5
<u>James Henry</u> – Woolford minor	September 1868	Lot 2	Con. 6
<u>David Henry</u> – Woolford minor	September 1868	Lot 3	Con. 6
<u>Elizabeth Henry</u> – Woolford spinster	September 1868	Lot 5	Con. 6
<u>John Henry</u> – Woolford minor	September 1868	Lot 4	Con. 6
<u>Sara Jane Henry</u> – Woolford sp	September 1868	Lot 6	Con. 6
<u>Thomas J. Turner</u> – Welland	May 1869	Lot 7	Con. 6
<u>Thomas J. Turner</u> – Brunel 1 child	September 1870	Lot 7, Lot 8	Cons 6
<u>John Wm. Mobbs</u> – late of England, Yeoman	October 1869	Lot 9	Con. 6
<u>George Menzies</u> – late of Scotland, Yeoman	November 1870	Lot 10	Con. 6
<u>Allan McGavin</u> – Nelson Twp., Laborer	November 1869	Lot 10	Con. 6
<u>James Hutchison</u> – Monck?, Stonemason 1 son, 2 daughters	October 1870	Lot 14 Lot 14	Con. 6 Con. 7
<u>Henry Seymour</u> – St. Thomas, Yeoman 1 son	1873	Lots 17, 18	Con. 6
<u>James Cooper</u> the younger , Macaulay 25 yrs.	May 1873 May 1874	Lot 32 Lot 31	Con. 6 Con. 6

<u>Joseph Wm. Trueman</u> – Bracebridge 4 sons, 5 daughters	February 1879 Sponsored by Wm. Trueman and John H. Trueman	Lots 31, 32	Con. 6
<u>John Nelson Heitsman</u> – Yarmouth, ON	Farmer October 1868	Lot 1	Con. 7
<u>Robert Brown</u> – Wellington Cty	Yeoman June 1869	Lot 1	Con. 7
<u>John King</u> – Wellington Cty	Yeoman April 1869	Lot 7	Con. 7
<u>Joseph Trueman</u> – Monck 4 sons, 5 daughters	May 1878	Lots 30, 31	Con. 7
<u>Robert Chapman</u> – late of England,	Laborer August 1868	Lot 2	Con. 8
<u>Robert Scarlett</u> – Haldimand	July 1869	Lot 4	Con. 8
<u>John Hillyard</u> – Grey	May 1869	Lot 7	Con. 8
<u>Byron Seely</u> Ingersoll	November 1868	Lot 10	Con. 8
<u>George Wilson</u> – West Gwillembury Laborer	October 1868	Lot 13	Con. 8
<u>Wm. Young</u> – North Gwillembury Laborer	October 1868	Lot 12	Con. 9
<u>John Holmes</u> – West Gwillembury Laborer	October 1868	Lot 13	Con. 9
<u>John Poole</u> – late of England	May 1870	Lot 22	Con. 9
<u>Wm. John Lawrence</u> – late of England 1 daughter Commercial Clerk	Ingersoll July 1869	Lots 1, 2 Lot 1	Con. 10 Con. 11
<u>Henry Ware</u> – late of England 1 son, 1 daughter Sponsored by Samuel Ware and Thomas Ware	Ingersoll August 1873 Boot & Shoe Maker	Lot 29 Lot 29	Con. 10 Con. 11
<u>Agnes Mary Lawrence</u> – late of Essex, England – Spinster Hamilton	July 1869	Lot 2	Con. 11
<u>Charles Treffry Lawrence</u> – late of Hamilton	July 1869	Lot 3	Con. 11
<u>John Reed</u> – London, England salesman	July 1869	Lot 5	Con. 11
<u>David Nelson</u> – Bruce Cty	May 1869	Lot 9	Con. 11

<u>Hugh Nelson</u> – Bruce Cty		May 1869	Lot 10	Con. 11
<u>Joseph Hanes</u> – Stephenson	19 yrs.	July 1872	Lot 10	Con. 11
<u>Samuel Ware</u> – Brunel 1 son, 1 daughter		May 1875	Lot 31	Con. 11
<u>Samuel Ware</u> – Brunel Shoe Maker	30 yrs.	December 1873	Lot 32	Con. 11
<u>Stephen Waters</u> – Brunel	19 yrs.	November 1875	Lot 22	Con. 12
<u>Maria Fetterley</u> – Brunel	Spinster	August 1871	Lot 14	Con. 12
<u>John Frederick Waters</u> – Buffalo, U.S.A. 2 sons, 6 daughters		August 1871	Lot 23 Lot 19	Con. 12 Con. 13
<u>Frederick Waters</u> – Brunel	20 yrs.	November 1874	Lot 24	Con. 12
<u>Wm. Seymour</u> – Brunel	1 son	June 1879	Lots 4, 5	Con. 13
<u>Wm. Ira Fetterly</u> – Brunel		May 1868	Lot 14	Con. 13
<u>John L. Fetterly</u> <u>Hiram Lewis</u> – Brunel		November 1868 May 1868	Lot 14 Lot 15	Con. 13 Con. 13
<u>John Peter Fetterly</u> – Durham		June 1869	Lot 16 Lot 17	Con. 23 Con. 13
<u>John Peter Fetterly</u> Winchester 1 son, 1 daughter		October 1869	Lot 18	Con. 13
<u>Rachel M. Casselman</u> – Brunel		May 1871	Lot 28	Con. 13
<u>Thomas Ware</u> – Galt	3 sons	November 1870	Lot 31 Lot 31	Con. 13 Con. 14
<u>Wm. Ira Fetterly</u> – Chaffey 3 sons, 3 daughters		occupies Lot 14, Cons. 13 which location was cancelled December 1873	Lot 3	Con. 14
<u>Charles Parsons</u> – Port Sarnia	Laborer	October 1868	Lot 10	Con. 14
<u>John E. McCann</u> – Ottawa 4 sons, 2 daughters		April 1873	Lot 14 Lot 12	Con. 14 Con. 14
<u>Jeremiah Casselman</u> – Brunel		June 1868	Lot 16	Con. 14

<u>John Peter Fetterly</u> – Brunel	June 1870	Lot 17	Con. 14
Occupies 17 and 18 – 13, and south part of l 16 – 13. The total of all these locations is 195 acres.			

<u>Wm. Casselman</u> – Williamsburg Twp. 5 sons, 2 daughters	June 1870	Lots 27, 28	Con. 14
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<u>James Johnson Casselman</u> – Williamsburg Twp.	June 1870	Lot 29	Con. 14
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McLean Township

1870

Frederick Burke	May
Henry Hartley	May
Thomas Ball	May
Edward Attridge	May
Thomas Langford	May
Samuel Gilbert	May
Jane Langford	May
Alexander Clarke	July
Thomas Lea Jr.	August
William Ellis	October
William Hussey	November
Thomas Lea	December

1871

William Duncan	January
Samuel Langmaid	February
Bethsheba Laziiien (Sazien?)	May
Mark Langford	June
Jeremiah Lynch	July
Joseph Dale	August
Jefferson Avery (5)	September
Joseph Haw	
Moses J. Dickie	September
Donald Cameron	September
William Tookey	September
Joseph Rogers Bastedo	September
Robert Walker Dickie	September
Margaret Eliza Dickie	September
John Walter Dickie	September
Robert Arnott Thompson	September
William H. Brown	September
William Schofield	September
John Padfield	September
David Frazer	September
William Morrow	October

Elizabeth Haw	October
Charles Wesley Crawford	September
Ada Christie Bastedo	October
William Haw	October
James Dickie	October
Amos Feren	October
James Drake	October
Samuel Henderson	September
William Ross	September
William Langmaid	November
John Findlay	November
John Haw	December
Joshua Kelly	November
John Mitchell	---

1872

Arthur Honsburger	April
Samuel Feren	April
Timothy Wardell	June
Robert Drake	July
Alfred Newton	October
William Spong	October
Harry Spong	November
Thomas Stephenson	November
Robert Crawford	November
Joseph Graham Moffatt	November
Henry Gerrow	December
Isaac Parlee	December
John Parlee	December
William Frazee	---
George Alexander Frezee	December
William Irwin	December
Catherine Moffatt	December

1873

Alexander Prestall	January
Joseph Langford	April
John Langford	April
Alice Ferguson	April
Arthur Wellington Dickie	May
Robert Dollar Jr.	June
William Higgins	September
James Robert Smith	June
Henry Richards	June
James Daniel Smith	May
Thomas Fairey	October

Walter Secord	October
George Trueman	---

1874

John Evert Lount	---
Isaac Brock Dickie	January
Robert F. Morrow	January
Peter Wright Jr.	June
Maria Langford	February
Eliza Spong	October
Annie Ferguson	September
Ferdinand Hussey	November
Robert Nay	November
William Nay	November
Joseph Bell	November

1875

William Osborne	June
Joseph Oburgh	October

1877

John Anderson	---
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1878

James Anderson	---
Annabella Rayner	---
John Ferguson	June
George Howard	July
Charles James Smith	October
Samuel Tackaberry	---
Charles Frederick Smith	---
Edward George Parker	August

1879

Albert Henderson	January
Elizabeth Williams	January
William Shewfelt	January
James Preston	January
James Norton	April
William James Tooke	July
Daniel Van Clieaf	October
Christopher Passmore	October
George Irwin	November

1881

Charles Ashbury November

1882

William E. Gammage ---

1883

John Langmaid July

1888

Samuel Robinson ---

Ridout Township

1874

Henry Gilmour	June
John Weaver	June
Henry Boothby (2)	June
John Robertson	June
Ebenezer Avery	June
James Duggan	June
Thomas Brown	July
Jesse Ryerson	August
Samuel Langmaid	August
Thomas McDaniel	March
Joseph Gilmour	September
Mary Gilmour	September
James Stuart Robson	September
Elizabeth Robson	September (alongside of it is written, cancelled)
Kate Stevenson	October
William Gilmour	October
Catharine Palmer	October
John William Palmer	October
Allen Gray	September
Edgar Fields Panter	November
Joel Tufford	November
William Alexis Vosburg	November
Benjamin Feren	November
William Booker	November
Archibald Brown	November
Duncan Brown	November
John Gillespie	November
Donald Cann	November
Henry Irwin	December

1875

Alfred Cawley	March
Jesse Ryerson (2)	April
David William Phillips	May
Sylvester Garrison	May
Sylvester Silverthorne	May
Thomas Silverthorne	May
John Albert Gordon	June
David Dickout	June
Thomas Marsh	July
Amy Catharine Dickout	August

1875

Rosanna Eliz. Dickout	August
Moses Hewitt	August
Joseph Wells	September
Alexander Gilmour	September
Henrietta Garrison	October
Priscilla Phillips	October
Joseph Elijah Allen	November

1876

Walter S. Phillips	January
Zachariah Cole	September
Peter Palmer	August
Charles Brown	October
Catharine Chevalier	October
Edward Plunkett	December
John Green	October

1877

Thomas Metcalfe	January
Egbert Boothby	March
Harris Demare	June
Harris Duncan	June
George Howard (cancelled)	June
William Peter Dickout	September
Joseph Tyrell	October
Richard Doney	October
Joseph Bigelow	November
William Gordon	November
William Palmer	December
William Piper	December
Henry Taylor	December

1878

William Duncan	January
Catharine Duncan	January
Jock Feren	January
Benjamin Hewitt	January
Arthur Morrow	June
Anthony Robertson	February
William Morrow	June
Joel Aldred	July
James Norton	November
Ira Tupper	December

1879

Francis Demare	January
Walter Disbrow	January
Mary Disbrow	January
William Horner	January
Samuel Sands	January
William Hanna	February
Jonathon Garrison	March
Benjamin Hewitt	April
Neil Brown	February
Michael Clapper	April
Joseph Drake	May
Zachariah Cole	July
Joseph C. Huckins	July
William Humphreys	August
James Humphreys	August
Richard Doney	August
William Charles Sparkes	August
Benjamin Hewitt	April
Alexander Hall	May
Patrick Duggan	January
William John Hamilton	November

1880

Samuel Feren	January
Turner Feren	February
Thomas H. Morrow	July

1882

Henry Robinson	March
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1884

John Ryckman June

1885

Absalom Gray May

1886

Donald Prosser April
Washington Bigelow July
Edward Hamilton August

Joel Aldred of McLean May 1878 Lots 27, 28 Con. 5

William Dickout 23 September 1875 Lot 24 Con. 6

Mary Grieves Robson 23 September 1874 Lot 4 Con. 9
Sw. in Brantford Twp.

Samuel Langmaid 58 Baysville August 1874 Lot 29 Con. 8

George Howard - Scugog 4 children 1877 Lots 27, 28 Con. 7

John Albert Gordon 1875 Lots 29, 30

John Green October 1876 Lots 27, 28 Con. 10

Walter S. Phillips – N.Y. December 1875 Lots 25, 26 Con. 10

Sylvester Garrison September 1875

David Wm. Phillips May 1875 Lots 19, 20 Con. 10

Wm. Gordon 18 November 1877 Lot 18 Con. 10

Zachariah Cole – Sherbourne 1876 Lots 10, 11 Con. 10
3 sons, 6 daughters Lot 10 Con. 11

William Horner November 1878 Lot 8 Con. 10
2 sons. 1 daughter

Grieves Robson – Brantford Twp. September 1874 (Bracebridge) Lot 4 Con. 10
4 sons, 3 daughters under 18
Sponsored by James Stuart Robson

James Stuart Robson – 21 September 1874 Lot 3 Con. 10

<u>Allan Gray</u>	7 children	September 1874	Lot 1	Con. 10
		Sponsored by Grieves Robson and Sam Feren		
<u>Thomas Robson Silverthorne</u>		May 1875	Lots 21, 22	Con. 11
<u>Joseph Tyrrell</u>	7 children	October 1877	Lot 15	Con. 11
			Lot 15	Con. 12
<u>Peter Palmer</u>	– Tilsonburg	August 1876	Lots 12, 13	Con. 11
Elizabeth Robson – Brantford Twp. – 18		September 1874	Lot 4	Con. 11
(Christopher Stephenson applied for above in May 1878) (William Orser – Oct. '80 Brantford Twp.)				
<u>Henry Robinson</u>	– Ridout - 60	February 1882	Lot 26	Con. A
<u>Benjamin Aldred</u>	- 18	January 1880	Lot 30	Con. 5
<u>William H. Anderson</u>			Lot 1, 2	Con. 10

There were 45 acres over and above the 200 acres to which I was entitled as a married man. I cannot pay for those 45 acres, so I hereby resign my location of Lo2, Cons. 10 containing 100 acres in favour of John O'Brien who wishes to locate it, but at the same time I wish to keep Lot 1, Cons. 10 for myself and family. X

<u>Thomas Wright Smith</u>		November 1876	Lot 8	Con. 10
			Lots 5, 6	Con. 11
<u>Arthur Morrow</u>	- Port Hope 1 son, 5 daughters	June 1878	Lots 16, 17	Con. 10
<u>Albert Ryckman</u>	– McLean - 59	April 1878	Lot 18	Con.10
<u>David Wm. Phillips</u>		May 1875	Lots 19, 20	Con. 10
<u>Sylvester Garrison</u>	– 2 sons	September 1875	Lots 21, 22	Con. 10
<u>Daniel Dickout</u>	– 1 son, 3 daughters	June 1875	Lots 23, 24	Con. 10
<u>Walter S. Phillips</u>	– N.Y.	November 1875	Lots 25, 26	Con. 10
<u>Joseph Albert Piper</u>	– Macaulay -18	November 1877	Lot 27	Con. 10
<u>John Green</u>	– Windhem Twp. 1 son, 1 daughter	October 1876	Lots 27, 28	Con. 10
<u>William Piper</u>	– Strathroy 2 sons, 3 daughters	November 1877	Lots 29, 30	Con. 10

<u>James Norton</u>		March 1894	Lots 7, 8	Con. 11
<u>Frances Demara</u>		December 1878	Lot 10	Con. 11
<u>Joseph Bigelow</u>		November 1877	Lots 10, 11	Con. 11
<u>Joseph Wells</u> – McLean		September 1875	Lot 3 Lot 18	Con. 7 Con. 11
<u>Sylvester Silverthorne</u> – 23		May 1875	Lot 20	Con. 11
<u>William Gordon</u>		May 1878	Lots 23, 24	Con. 11
<u>Benjamin Feren</u> McLean - 18		1874	Lots 26	Con. 11
<u>Joel Feren</u> - Morrison - 22		1878 (Severn Bridge)	Lot 29	Con. 11
<u>Sam Feren</u> - Ridout		June 1880	Lot 29	Con. 11
<u>Turner Feren</u>		February 1880	Lot 30 Lot 30	Con. 11 Con. 12
<u>Wm. Charles Sparkes</u> – Ridout		July 1879	Lot 1 Lots 1, 2	Con. 12 Con. 13
Sponsored by Ed Hamilton and Charles Brown				
<u>Joseph Morrow</u> 22		November 1894	Lot 5	Con. 12
<u>Henry Demara</u> – Scugog 20		November 1877	Lot 12	Con. 12
<u>Francis Demara</u> – Mclean 52		November 1877	Lot 13	Con. 12
<u>Wm. Morrow</u> – Scugog 1 son, 1 daughter		May 1878	Lots 17, 18	Con. 12
<u>Wm. Booker</u> – King Twp. 1 daughter		November 1874 Bradford	Lots 20, 21	Con. 12
<u>Archibald Brown</u> - 18		November 1874	Lot 23	Con. 12
<u>Duncan Brown</u> 4 sons, 3 daughters		November 1874	Lots 24, 25	Con. 12
<u>Neil Brown</u> – Ridout 19		1878	Lot 26	Con. 12
<u>Anthony Robertson</u> - Mclean 26		February 1878	Lot 27	Con. 12
<u>Catherine Chevalier</u> – Ridout 36 Widow		September 1876	Lot 28	Con. 12

<u>Harry Boothby</u> – Ridout 5 sons, 1 daughter		June 1874	Lots 16, 17	Con. 13
<u>Jesse Ryerson</u> – Norfolk County		August 1874	Lots 18, 19	Con. 13
<u>Donald Currie</u> 24		November 1874	Lot 20	Con. 13
<u>Ebenezer Avery</u> – Ridout 1 son, 1 daughter – sponsored by John Robertson		June 1874	Lots 26, 27	Con. 13
<u>Charles Brown</u> – Brunel 21		October 1876 (Port Sydney)	Lot 7	Con. 14
<u>Henry Irwin</u> = Milton 29		December 1874	Lot 7	Con. 14
<u>John Robertson</u> – the younger 2 children – sponsored by John Robertson the elder and Ebenezer Avery		June 1874	Lots 14, 15	Con. 14
Sponsored by Charles Drake – he later accepts payment for Improvements made by him, to Charles Newcombe – September 1875			Lots 2, 5	Con. 10
<u>Amos Ferren</u> 2 children Sponsored by Jefferson Avery		February 1872	Lot 3 Lot 3	Con. 10 Con. 11
<u>James Drake</u>		October 1871	Lot 4 Lot 4	Con. 10 Con. 11
<u>George Terryberry</u> – Lincoln City 1 son, 1 daughter		April 1878	Lot 4 Lot 4	Con. 10 Con. 11
<u>Wm. Aanderson</u> – Peterborough		November 1870	Lot 7	Con. 10
<u>Charles Drake</u> – McLean 5 children Sponsored by Jefferson Avery		February 1872	Lot 7	Con. 10
<u>Daniel Vanclieaf</u> Which has been occupied by me since July 1878 – sometime previous, the former locate, Albert Russell, left this section. With his consent, I entered on said lot, and now apply to locate the same, as said Russell avowed he desired to vacate his location to me, with what improvements there was thereon.		October 1879	Lot 8	Cons. 10
<u>Joseph Langford</u> – McLean 18 yrs.		February 1873	Lot 18	Con. 10
<u>John Langford</u> – McLean 18 yrs.		February 1873	Lot 19	Con. 10
<u>Maria Langford</u> – McLean 18 yrs.		February 1876	Lot 22	Con. 10
<u>John Brown</u> – McLean 37 yrs.		April 1872	Lot 23	Con. 10
<u>James Robert Smith</u> – Toronto 4 children		May 1873	Lot 25, 26	Con. 10

<u>Elizabeth Williams</u> – McLean		October 1871	Lots 5, 6, 7	Con.11
<u>Samuel Henderson</u> – Burford	4 children	September 1871	Lots 9, 10, 11 Lot 10	Con. 12 Con. 13
<u>Jefferson Avery</u> – McLean	4 sons, 3 daughters Total of 204 acres.	September 1871	Lots 12, 13, 14 Lots 15, 16	Con. 13 Con. 13
<u>Andrew Atchison</u> – Stratford		23 yrs. May 1875	Lot 30	Con. 13
<u>William Fraser</u> – Elgin City		February 1872	Lots 24, 25	Con. 1
<u>John Sparrow</u> – Burford Twp.		May 1870	Lot 26	Con. 1
<u>George A. Fraser</u> – Elgin Cty	18	March 1872	Lot 27	Con. 1
<u>Edward McGavley</u> – Burford Twp.	5 children	May 1870	Lots 27, 28	Con. 1
<u>David Nelson</u> – Burford Twp.	6 children	April 1870	Lots 29, 30	Con. 1
<u>John Mitchell</u> – Macauley		October 1871	Lots 29, 30	Con. 1
<u>James Andison</u> – Lanark	19	December 1877	Lot 23	Con. 2
<u>William Ellis</u> – Brantford	1 son, 4 daughters	October 1870	Lot 23 Lot 23	Con. 2 Con. 3
<u>William Williams</u> – McKillop Twp.	1 son, 1 daughter	April 1870	Lots 27, 28	Con. 2
<u>James Connolly</u> – McKillop	2 sons, 2 daughters	April 1870	Lots 29, 30	Con. 2
<u>Robert Dollar the younger</u> – Mclean	18	June 1873	Lot 31	Con. 2
<u>James Preston</u> – 1 son, 1 daughter		January 1877	Lots 8, 9	Con. 3
<u>Charles Brown</u> – Hamilton		August 1870	Lot 27	Con. 3
<u>Henry Spong</u> – Port Hope	19	November 1872	Lot 5	Con. 4
<u>George Newton</u> – 2 sons		September 1873	Lots 10, 11	Con. 4
<u>William Langmaid</u> – Mr. Verono, Ont.		November 1871	Lot 12	Con. 4
<u>Joseph Bell</u> – Perth Cty	25	November 1874	Lot 18	Con. 4

<u>Robert Wilson</u> - late of England		November 1869	Lot 29	Con. 4
<u>Timothy Wardell</u> – Macaulay		May 1872	Lots 12, 28	Con. 4
<u>Thomas Brown</u> – Hamilton		August 1872	Lot 27	Con. 4
<u>William Ellis</u> – Macaulay 3 sons, 2 daughters		1877	Lots 24, 27	Con. 4
<u>Isaac Brock Dickie</u>		December 1873	Lot 3	Con.5
<u>Eliza Spong</u> – Port Hope - Spinster		December 1874	Lot 4	Con. 5
<u>Wm. Spong</u> – England	24	October 1872	Lot 5	Con. 5
<u>Arthur Wellington Dickie</u>	24	May 1873	Lot 6	Con. 5
<u>John Aldridge</u> – McLean	21	June 1884	Lot 8	Con. 5
<u>David Frazee</u>	4 children	November 1872	Lot 9	Con. 5
<u>Francis Berry</u>	38	June 1873	Lot 10	Con. 6
<u>John Langmaid</u> – Brantford	18	November 1876	Lot 10	Con. 5
<u>Michael Kelly</u> – McLean	28	May 1894	Lot 10	Con. 5
<u>Nicholas D. Lazier</u>	1 child	May 1871	Lot 13	Con. 5
<u>Bathsheba Lazier</u>		May 1871	Lots 22, 23	Con. 5
<u>Samuel Tackaberry</u> – McLean	1 child	August 1878	Lot 24	Con. 5
<u>George Howard</u> (He is giving up lots 27, 28 in 7 th Cons. Of Ridout, “being worthless to me for cultivation”.)		July 1878	Lot 25	Con. 5
<u>John Haw</u>	2 children	January 1873	Lot 1	Con. 6
<u>George Gammage</u>		November 1870	Lots 2, 3	Con. 6
<u>Thomas Ball</u> – Macaulay – farmer		May 1870	Lot 21	Con. 6
<u>William Hussey</u> - Macaulay	6 children	1870	Lot 32	Con. 6
<u>Thomas Richards</u> – U.S.A.	4 children	November 1870	Lots 30, 31	Con. 6
<u>Charles James Smith</u> – McLean	3 children	October 1878	Lot 28	Con. 6
			Lot 28	Con. 7
			Lot 25	Con. 6

<u>Samuel Langmaid</u>	19	January 1876	Lot 9	Con. 7
<u>Walter Secord</u> – Blenheim Twp	21 - farmer	October 1873	Lots 11, 12	Con. 7
<u>Alexander Campbell Anderson</u> – Peterborough	- Blacksmith	November 1870	Lot 16	Con. 7
<u>Wm. H. Brown</u> – Burford –Sawyer	3 children – 2 sons, 1 daughter	August 1871	Lots 16, 17, 18	Con. 7
<u>Wm. Gammage</u> – West Zorra Twp.	4 children	December 1870	Lots 20, 23	Con. 7
<u>John G. Richards</u>		December 1870	Lot 26	Con. 7
<u>Wm. Wilkinson</u> - late of England		April 1871	Lot 27	Con. 7
<u>Thomas Henry Richards</u>		December 1870	Lot 29	Con. 7
<u>Wm. Thomas</u> – Toronto		May 1870	Lots 29, 32	Con. 7
<u>Thomas Lea</u> – late of Staffordshire, England		August 1870	Lots 30, 31	Con. 7
<u>Joseph Rogers Bastedo</u> – West Oxford	5 sons, 2 daughters	September 1871	Lot 14 Lot 14 Lot 10	Con. 8 Con. 9 Con. 10
<u>Alexander Henderson</u> – Burford	44 yrs. to await cancellation	November 1872	Lot 15	Con. 8
<u>Alexander Henderson</u> – McLean	2 sons, 2 daughters	May 1878 and in Franklin	Lot 15 Lot 17	Con. 8 Con. 7
<u>John Haw</u> – McLean	53	December 1873	Lot 20	Con. 8
<u>John Haw</u> – Halton County	1 child	September 1871	Lot 20 Lot 20	Con. 5 Con. 7
<u>Mark Langford</u> – McLean		June 1871	Lot 21	Con. 8
<u>John Langmaid</u> – Baysville – Shoemaker	34yrs.	1882	Lot 22	Con. 8
<u>Edward Attridge</u> – McLean	1 daughter	February 1872	Lots 23, 24	Con. 8
<u>Edward Attridge</u> – Perth - Labourer		May 1870	Lot 24	Con. 8
<u>Francis Tookey</u> – Macaulay	Have been improvements made by former locate	February 1881	Lots 28, 29	Con. 8
<u>Ferdinand Hussey</u> – McLean	18 yrs.	November 1876	Lot 31	Con. 8

Marjory Fraser	November
Alfred Wilder	December
Isaac Ketch	December
Wellington Ketch	December
Henry Corbett	December
Christopher Taylor	December
Alexander Corbett	December
Andrew Corbett	December
John Corbett	December
Simon Corbett	December
Thomas Osborne	December
William Bildson Osborne	December
George Meredith	December
Hugh Taylor	December
William Buchanan	December

1878

Wilfred Calvert	January	Richard Francis Marsh	July
Harvey Clarke	January	William W. Parken (2)	August
Boyce Henry Cunnington	January	Adolphus Booth	---
John French	January	Sam Ellis Green	June
William McElwain	January	Edgar A. Brown	December
John McLennan	January	George A. Brown	December
Squire Wilder	January	Absealom Brown	December
Charlotta Ann French	February	George Havis	December
John French (4)	March	Charles Schafer	December
Jessie Corbett	April	Henry Schafer	December
Nicholas Parken	May	Richard Blackwell	December
William Parken	May	William Blackwell	December
Alexander Goldie – cancelled Oct. 85	Apr.	Russel Wilder	February
M. Edmund Gouldie (4)	May	George Waltonbury	May

1878

John A. Dale	June
Adam Schafer	June
Ralph Cresswell	June

1879

Thomas Keown	January
Robert Poole	February
Margaret E. S. Dale	March
Mary Dale	March
William L. Efrick	March
Richard F. Marsh	April
David Elder Dickie	April

Gilford Ruggles	April
Edward Hamilton	August
Joseph McCutcheon	August – 4 entries = 3 previously given to Albert Lovell
Rachel Dale	Mar.
William John Hamilton	September
George Burk	October
William Wilson	October
John Wells	August
Godlip Wood	January
William Keown	February
James Cunningham	July
Joseph Wilder	November

1880

Thomas E. S. Salmon	November
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(2 entries, patented May 4, 86, Name on each of these entries is for Robert Poole, '79. Mr. Salmon's name comes under both of these entries. Presume Mr. Poole gave up these locations.)

John Munroe	January
James G. Robson	November
Grieves Robson	November
James G. Robson	November
Thomas Keown	September
Robert Keown	February
John Gilmore	October

1881

Samuel G. Robson	December
George Gray Robson	December
(for lot which had been applied for by Adolphus Booth in '78)	
John Trueman	March
Wellington Keetch	January
Mark Cann	January

1882

Egbert Boothby (2)	April
George Burk	---
John Wesley French	January
Charles Wellington Thompson	March

1883

William McCutcheon	March
William Charles Sparkes	April
Arthur Osborne	January

1884

William Marsh	November
Uriah Ketch	June
John Pratt	October

1885

Joseph A. Wood	December
Mary Kane	May

1887

George Kelly	April
John Prince	April
Harry Boothby	July

1888

Julius Humiez (2)	February
Peter Larsen	May
Joseph Wilder	November
Frank Blackwell	March

John A. Dale June 1, 1878, Bracebridge, Lots 2,3, Con. 2
male head of family, one son under 18.

Joseph McCutcheon June 5, 1879 Lot 2 Con. 3

Harry Boothby Jr. age 23, of Township of Franklin, Lot 22, Con. 3
said lot is wholly unoccupied and unimproved, except for 1 acre which has been cleared
and cropped by myself.

Joseph McCutcheon Sept. 12, 1879 –Lots 10, 11, 13, 14. Con. 4
signed by whoever made out form, Mr. McCutcheon's mark

Boyce Henry Cunnington 23 years, lot 21, Con. 4 Dec. 21, 1877.
Sworn before W. H. Brown, Baysville

Egbert Boothby Township of Ridout – 30 years – Lot 22, Con. 4
April 18, 1887, John Haw, Commissioner

George Burk Township of Sherbourne –Lots 6.7.8., Con 5
Lot unoccupied and unimproved, except about three acres slashed, and that has grown
up, and a small shanty erected that has fallen down. Sw. before Theo C. Taylor, Cr. Lands
Agent, Bracebridge, March 20, 1882

John Munroe December 1879 Lots 13, 14 – Con. 5

<u>John McLennan</u>	City of Montreal – 60 years old Lot 6, Con 6 Dec. 1877		
<u>Richard Frank Marsh</u>	sponsors – George F. Marsh of Brunel John Clarke of Franklin Lot 8, Con. 7, signed in Baysville, 1878		
<u>Mark Cann</u>	age 18 – 1880		
<u>Richard Blackwell</u>	of Hamilton Lot 5, Con. 9 5 children, 3 sons, 2 daughters – Oct. 1878		
<u>Frank Blackwell</u>	23 years – Lot 1, Con. 10, June 2, '88 About 7 acres cleared some years ago, but are now grown up with brush		
<u>Henry Corbett</u>	26 years, Lot 5, Con. 10, Dec. '77		
<u>Simon Corbett</u>	of Clinton County Lot 6, Con. 10		
<u>Thomas Keown</u>	1880 – Lot 7, Cons. 10, Lot 7, Con 11 Sponsored by Sam Wells and Wm. Blackwell		
<u>William Blackwell</u>	22 years, 1878 Lot 9, Con. 10		
<u>Edmund Gouldie</u>	April 1, 1878 Lots 10, 11, 12, 13, Con. 10 2 sons, 1 daughter		
<u>Alexander Corbett</u>	24 years	November 1877	Lot 2, Con. 11
<u>Andrew Corbett</u>	25 years	November 1877	Lot 3, Con. 11
<u>John Corbett</u>	18 years	November 18'77	Lot 4, Con. 11
<u>Simon Corbett</u>		November 1877	Lot 5, Con. 11
<u>William Keown</u>	18 years	November 1877	
<u>Thomas Quinn</u>		April 1881 1 son, 2 daughters, his mark	
<u>Robert Norton Hill</u>		of Franklin, 5 Lots, Con. 11 Sponsors, Wm. Storey, Thomas Rowland Hill Sw. in Huntsville, May 28, 1879, before F. L. Howland, J.P.	
<u>John Pratt</u> of Bracebridge		October 1884 2 sons, 1 daughter	Lot 10, Con. 8 Lot 11, Con. 9
<u>Charles Schafer</u>	19 years	November 1878	Lot 11, Con. 8

<u>Henry Schafer</u>	21 years	November 1878	Lot 12, Con. 8
<u>Richard Frank Marsh</u>	24 years	June 1878	Lot 9, Con. 9
Note – October 1879 – Received from Mr. Jacob Dabald, sum of \$70.00, in payment in full for improvements made by me on Lot 10, in Cons. 9 of Franklin. Signed, James C. Davison			
<u>Wellington Keetch</u>	23 years	1880	Lots 15, 16, 17, 18 Con. 9
<u>Simon Corbett</u>		October 1878	
<u>William Wilson</u> – 39 years		August 1879	Lot 8, Con. 10
<u>Robert Keown</u>	55 years “except improvements of former locate which I hav purchased”	January 1880	Lot 14, Con.1
<u>Russell Wider</u>		October 1877 Sponsored by Coleman Ketch and Squire Wilder	Lot 17, Con. 11
<u>Adam Schafer</u>		April 1878	Lots 11, 12, Con. 11
<u>James Cunningham</u> – 35 years		June 1879	Lot 14, Con. 11
<u>Thomas Keown</u>		November 1878	Lot 3, Con. 12 Lot 3, Con. 13
<u>John Keown</u> - 24 years		November 1885	Lot 9, Con. 12
<u>Joseph Wilder</u> – 24 years		November 1879	Lot 4, Con. 13
<u>William Quinn</u>	3 sons, 5 daughters	June 1879	Lots 4, 5, Con. 14
<u>David Millar</u>		September 1879	Lots 6, 7, Con. 14
<u>Robert Norton Hill</u>		May 1879	Lots 21-25, Con. 14
<u>Charles Brown</u>		October 1877 Sponsored by James Shrigley & Robert Robinson	Lot 8, Con. 1 Lots 12, 13 Con. 2
<u>Robert Poole</u>		February 1878	Lots 14, 15 Con. 2 Lot 14 Con. 3
<u>Charles Brown</u>		October 1877	Lots 12, 13 Con. 2
<u>Robert Poole</u> -		March 1878	Lots 14, 15 Con. 2
Across the above two entries is written – withdrawal It would seem there were; 30 acres in lot 12, 31 acres in lot 13, 30 acres in lot 14, 5 acres in lot 15			

Robert Poole

February 1879

Lot 13

Con. 3

March 1878

Lot 14 Con. 3, Lot 13 – 90 acres,

Lot 14 could be 115 or 45 acres

Mr. Salmon applied for both of the above in November 1880, and they were patented to him on May 4, 1886

Mr. Poole

February 1879

Lot 15

Con. 3

20 acres in lot 15

Whether he took possession of this I do not know, for there is nothing else entered here.

In the Franklin file, there is also a copy of a mortgage – it is not signed, mentions no names – nor a specific date but, was made out in 1889, re the sale of Bigwin Island.

Early Days in Haliburton - H. R. Cummings

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Bobcaygeon Road began in 1857 and was completed in 1862. Minden first called Gull River – had its beginnings in 1859.

Free Grant and Homestead Act became law on Feb. 28, 1868 and struck at the very foundations of the Canadian Land and Emigration Co. By this act, the Government of Ontario threw open the settlement of nearly 3,000,000 acres of land from the Ottawa River to Georgian Bay.

The hunters and trappers in the Haliburton District congregated in great numbers in the village for the semi-annual fur sales held on the 24th of May and the 5th of Nov. of each year.

Lumbering and the Drive

A good many settlers or their sons took out logs and drive logs on contract. A hardy race of lumbermen grew up. Not all could qualify for the severity of life of the lumbermen and few could equal the skill of the French Canadian timber makers. George S. Thompson has left a picture of a lumber shanty in Haliburton Township, early in the 70's, and the distribution of labour among its inhabitants.

“The size of the shanties is about 40 feet square”, wrote Thompson. “The walls were made of large pine logs, notched and dove-tailed together, and were six logs high. On top of the walls from end to end were two enormous stringers, or beams to hold up the roof which was also made of pine logs, formed of halves of trees hollowed out, called scoops, and the greatest expense in building a shanty, is making the scoops or roof. The walls of the shanty and the roof were stuffed with moss on the inside and the walls on the outside, plastered with mud. A large opening, about 8 feet square, was left in the centre of the roof, and a wooden tapered chimney about six feet high, built up to carry off the smoke of the fire place, or camboose, which was built of sand and stone, in the centre of the shanty. The opening in the roof, or the chimney let in lots of daylight, so no windows were required, and, at night, the huge fire supplied all the light necessary. Sometimes, a floor of logs was put in, but, just as often, none. One door about five feet square and the shanty was ready for the bunks or sleeping berths of the men, which was built of poles around on side and end. The other side and end was occupied by the foreman, clerk and cook, and there was an unwritten law which strictly prohibited any of the crew occupying or taking up the foreman's side of the shanty. A stable built in the same rough way to hold about 10 pairs of horses and a round storehouse and granary completed the set of buildings.”

In 1879, the “Manitoba Fever” began and drew away almost all incoming emigrants from Ontario, or even tempted old settlers to leave their fare in all parts of the province, to try their fortunes in a territory where no clearing is required and where the soil is said to produce 100 bushels to the acre.

Northern Exposure

Tales of the North Country by Reverend Richard C. Warder 1957

From the age of eight, Rev. Warder lived in the town of Rugby, Warwickshire. In 1924, the Archbishop of Algoma, the Most Rev. George Thorneloe came to London, England to seek seven young men to go to Canada.

Immediately after my ordination as a priest, I went to my first charge, a temporary one, at Bruce Mines, some 60 miles from the Sault Ste. Marie. The Bishop hoped to send me to succeed the incumbent of St. Ambrose Church, Baysville, the Reverend Canon Hazlehurst, who had been in Baysville for over 30 years.

Baysville is seventeen miles from Bracebridge, in glorious Muskoka lake country. I spent two days with Father Sadler, and his charming, hospitable wife, in the lovely home they had built overlooking the Muskoka River. They were so happy to share their lovely home with the clergy. On the day I was to leave, they gave me a beautiful brass cross and candlesticks for the Baysville altar.

I caught the famous Kelly stage, (car in the summer and horse in the winter) and set forth to my new work. Eagerly I scanned the passing countryside and watched for the first glimpse of Baysville. My driver said that I would see the church before I entered the village. The beautiful church, almost new, and built to replace the one destroyed by fire was dedicated to St. Ambrose. It was a well-built structure of Milton brick, having a beautifully toned bell, and a tower surmounted by a golden cross. Now, on this Fall afternoon, I saw it for the first time, and my heart thrilled within me.

Our equipage drew up in front of the store owned by Mr. Bob Ellis, the priests Warden. After a due shaking of hands, Bob proposed that since the Women's Auxiliary of the church was meeting in the church hall, I might like to meet the ladies and have a cup of tea. We walked to the church and hall which are built on top of a hill, overlooking the village. News of my coming had spread and they were naturally anxious to gain a glimpse of the new minister. Glancing up, while some distance away, I saw women's faces in each of the hall windows. But, when we entered the building, behold, every lady was seated at her work. They were making mats and quilts. I never let on that I had seen them peeking out of the hall windows.

After we had enjoyed our cup of tea, Mr. Ellis showed me the lovely church, one of the prettiest little churches in Muskoka. The interior was finished in birch wood. The sanctuary was adorned with stained glass windows, portraying St. Monica, St. Cecelia, and the good shepherd. The other windows had beautiful tinted glass. It was so clean and so bright. I was indeed delighted with St. Ambrose Church. It seemed rather strange, that while the Anglican Church was dedicated to a Latin saint, the Roman Catholic Church bore the name of the patron saint of England, St. George.

I was quite taken with the large old rectory. It had so many out buildings on the back, wood sheds, and other appendages, that the kitchen windows were darkened. The rooms in the house were large and pleasant, front room, study, dining room, four bedrooms, and attic bath room with a storage tank with cold water for a bath, (the hot water had to be carried up in buckets). To get the cold water up to the attic required pumping the kitchen pump. I could picture myself building up enormous muscles by the effort. I lacked the ambition, and took my baths in a washtub on the kitchen floor.

There was a nice fireplace in the study, which room served both as a sitting room and a study, because I had no furniture for the big front room. I was thrilled with the nice big garden, containing some large maple trees, a nice lawn, and a sizeable kitchen garden. I am fond of gardening, and here was my chance to practice it.

Our rectory was flanked by some excellent neighbours. On one side Miss Louie and Miss Maude Ellis lived. They were both wonderful church women. On the other side lived Mr. Mark Langford, his wife, and daughter Alberta. Alberta was the telephone operator and the exchange was situated conveniently for my use. Arrangements had been made for me to stay for a few days at the Baysville Hotel, operated by Mr. and Mrs. Rowe and their fine family of boys and girls. Also, I was to arrange to get my meals there. I spent a few days settling in, then moved into the parsonage. The house was heated by three large box stoves, the fire place, and the Abraham Lincoln kitchen range. In addition to this, there was also a Franklin stove. As it was November, there was no time to be lost in ordering wood – maple and birch. This had to be split for the kitchen stove. I had never split wood before, and I used to split enough for a day or two, and then quit to recuperate. There was stove pipe that travelled like a huge boa constrictor around the ceilings, around the corners upstairs, into the bedrooms. Owing to the formation of creosote in the elbows, these all had to be taken down, cleaned out, and replaced at least twice in the winter time.

My mission consisted of Baysville, St. Mary Magdalene's Church at Dorset, Fox Point, where there was a lovely little Church of St. John In the Woods, and Port Cunnington, where there was a nice group of church people, but no church. These last two places, like Dorset, were situated on the beautiful Lake of Bays, a sheet of water, with 365 miles of shoreline. I discovered that the Dorset church was closed, as there were so few people left of our faith, and that Fox Point and Port Cunnington closed up for services after November until the break-up of the ice. I resolved to remedy this situation, and opened Dorset – also, to walk over the ice to Fox Point and Port Cunnington. The Bishop promised to get me a motor boat for the summer, so that I could reach all my places regularly. I began my work in Baysville, by commencing regular Sunday services and frequent weekday services. Soon after my arrival, I was merrily ringing the big church bell for a saint's day service on a week day, when I looked out of the open door, and observed considerable running to and fro in the village. Men appeared as if by magic. I did not know that the church bell was the fire bell too. I refused to give up ringing it on weekdays, but agreed to ring a distinctive peal.

I was warmly received by the Baysville folk, and soon, I was eating meals all over the place. I have avoided mentioning too many names in this book, because so very many were so generous and kind to me. I should refrain from mentioning the Alfred Winder family, the Roberts family of Rosebank farm, and the Rowe family of Baysville Hotel. These and many more received me constantly in their homes. Every Christmas I was in the mission, I was invited to the Alfred Winder home. The two Miss Ellis's, my next door neighbours, were always sending me food.

I had my snowshoes, and resolved to get to Fox Point and Port Cunnington. I got a ride part way up the lake road with the mail carrier in his sleigh, then, took off across the lake, to visit and pray with my people who were most isolated. I would have night prayers with the family, then instruct the children. The following morning, I would have Holy Communion in the house, and then move on to the next house. As I would seldom know the day I would get back to Baysville, I would sometimes discover that the fire was out, and the temperature in rooms, below freezing. Then, I would quickly light a fire, heat a brick and climb between the blankets with the brick at my feet.

My first winter in Baysville sped along, I heard frequently from Bishop Rocksborough-Smith, about the boat I would have to have to do my work, when the lake ice thawed. The parish church of St. Mary in the town of Stafford in England was performing a wonderful missionary work, by purchasing, and partly maintaining a fleet of mission boats, in different parts of the world, and the bishop was in contact with them about a boat for the Baysville mission. The ice went out the middle of April, and Mr. Bob Ellis kindly took me in his boat to Fox Point, where I held my first service in the lovely little wooden Church of St. John in the Woods. This church could be reached by water only. It was interesting to watch the boats coming from all directions and tying up at the church dock.

The church at Fox Point and the congregation at Port Cunnington were built up largely through the faithful witness of Mr. Tom Salmon of Fox Point and Mr. Boyce Cunnington, after whom Port Cunnington was named. I met both of these grand old patriarchs of the church. Mr. Salmon was an English Public School boy, and a graduate of Oxford University. As a young man, he discovered Lake of Bays, chose a spot and settled and married. He was a real pioneer, and a mighty hunter and fisherman. His fine bearded face, bespoke his strong character. He was marvellous at handling a canoe. The Salmon snowshoes were in demand and beautifully made. He also built outstanding canoes. The lovely big house had pleasant rooms, big fireplace and a nice fenced grounds.

Mr. Salmon and his son and daughter were fine people. I was always welcome as a guest, for any length of time. Mr. Cunnington too, was a fine character. These good Church of England men settled in Canada so many years ago and saw to it that the worship of the church was not forgotten. One of the first things they did was to build a church. I saw the prayer books and Bibles they had brought with them from the Old Country. Often, when Mr. Salmon, bearded and dressed for the woods was guiding a party on a trip, he would come out with some Latin or Greek quotation from the ancient classics. Sundry American or Canadian teachers and professors on vacation, would be quite excited to discover that their husky guide was an Oxford scholar.

The first mission was so well attended that I asked Father Palmer if he could arrange a mission for Fox Point and Port Cunnington. He gladly consented, and about the first week in March, while the ice was still sound, we set up the lake, Anne, myself, and Father Palmer. As in those days, he was heavier than we were, and he went ahead to break the trail. We waddled behind like a series of ducks in a straight line, across the ice. At Fox Point, we got a warm welcome from the Salmon family. About 8 p.m. we saw the lights from the lanterns coming from various points on the lake, and the congregation arrived, men, women, and children, all rosy from the frosty air.

Mr. Salmon had the big fireplace with a roaring fire full of big maple logs. Father Palmer sat in a chair in the centre, and we were all gathered around. Thus the mission started. Next morning we had Holy Communion and on we went to Port Cunnington. We went to different homes each night, and Father Palmer drew the people after him. When it became too far for people to follow on foot, they brought out their sleighs with people wrapped in blankets. Our crowds increased every night and the singing improved. Violins and guitars were enlisted.

On April 4, 1930, our little son was born. Our boy became a portable model. We fixed up a clothes basket with two handles that would fit into the back seat of the car. Once, the infant travelled with Mr. Salmon in a canoe. We would certainly not have entrusted anyone, except the wise, old woodsman.

Several years went by happily in the Baysville mission. We were able to get St. Mary Magdalene Church in Dorset opened, and a small but faithful congregation built up. The work at Norway Point gradually grew, as more summer visitors discovered the church.

It is the real responsibility of a mission priest, to be on the watch for new opportunities of ministering to people. A rather sad chain of events now opened the door of opportunity to me. That event was the depression that having begun in the United States spread to Canada. As our salary could scarcely be less, we saw our people hard hit, and tried to share in their struggle.

It was decided by the Government of Canada to move as many unemployed men as possible from the cities to the country, where they would be engaged in building roads. The road between Bracebridge and Dorset was to be improved, largely rebuilt, and entirely new areas opened up by wider roads. I saw the beginnings of six large camps, each camp situated some seven miles apart. Now, I was anxious to get in on the ground floor, and become chaplain to these camps.

I ministered to the men of these camps, trying to collect clothing which they needed from various sources, and writing to the Imperial Tobacco Co. for instance, at Christmas time. They came across with a big shipment – a present for every man in the camps. The Red Cross sent the men wonderful gifts of socks and sweaters. In a few months, the city men became good road builders. Today, fine wide roads remains as an enduring monument to the men of the depression.

The Light of Other Years – Gravenhurst

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Acknowledgements

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But, most especially, we value the contribution of Mr. Claude Snider, who made photographs available, and of the Editor of the Muskoka News, and Gravenhurst Banner, for files which were absolutely essential.

The Harlow White pencil sketches are from the John Ross Robertson Collection, and were reproduced with the special permission of the Toronto Reference Library. The patience and help of the officers of the Public Records Office at the Ontario Archives, contributed significantly to the preparation of this book.

This book was published by the Municipal Corporation of Gravenhurst to mark the eightieth anniversary of the town, and the one hundredth anniversary of the nation.

Forward

This book does not presume to be anything more than a sketch of the history of Gravenhurst. Regrettably, many details have been omitted and many citizens worthy of mention have been unintentionally overlooked. But, in spite of obvious shortcomings, perhaps these pages will open the door of your memory, and for a little while, allow the light of other days to shine again, and warm your heart.

Waterways and Roadways

As far as we know, Lieut. Henry Briscoe of the Royal Engineers, was the first white man who recorded details of an exploratory to the locale we claim as home – 1826.

Other expeditions through the district were led by Alexander Shirriff – 1829, and by Lieut. J. Certhew, R.N. with Lieut. F. Baddelay, R.E. – 1835.

David Thompson was 67, when in August 14 – 26, 1837 he surveyed what were to be known as Lake Joseph, Lake Rosseau and Lake Muskoka.

The Muskoka Road

In 1857, the Minister of Agriculture announced plans for a road to run from the head of navigation of Lake Couchiching at a point called Washago to the Grand Falls at Muskoka. So, in 1858, work began. In the summer of 1859, Phillip Vankoughnet, the Commissioner of Crown Lands in the Government of John A. MacDonald, appointed R. J. Oliver of Orillia, to be the Crown Land Agent for the Severn and the Muskoka Road. On Oct. 1st, 1859, Oliver went to Severn Bridge, and there, issued the first location tickets to applicants waiting for him. Among the first locates were the Symington's, David Lieth, James Jackson, William Johnson, John Young and James McCabe.

The Government limited its grants at this time to 100 acres, subject to actual settlement. By 1860, the road was open only to the present Gravenhurst. At the end of 1860, the population of the Grant Lands north of Severn was approximately 190 people of a mix of Irish, English, Scots and a few Germans, who had toiled to clear about 170 acres of Grant Land, of which about 87 had actually been cropped. Records indicate that these pioneers sold their wheat for 90 cents a bushel, oats for 30 cents a bushel, peas for 50 cents a bushel, barley for 70 cents a bushel and maple sugar for 10 cents a pound.

Mickey and Mother McCabe

There seems little doubt these two were the first settlers north of Beaver Creek, when they took up land in 1859. He was born in Ireland in 1816, and she, in Scotland, in 1826.

Apparently McCabe had two locations. One was on Muskoka Bay, near the former Calydor Sanitorium. Here, McCabe constructed a wharf, and the locale became known as McCabe's Landing. The second location was constructed in the summer of 1861 on the west side of the Muskoka Road, opposite the present Anglican cemetery. The roomy log house was known as McCabe's Tavern of the Freemason's Arms Hotel. Little is known about the interior of the hotel. However, records suggest there was one large room downstairs with a bar in one corner, a post office in another, a dining table at one end, and a cook stove at the other. McCabe's was a well-known hotel which catered to early travellers, surveyors and settlers. The hotel operated until 1865, when Mr. T. Horton acquired it.

Later, after remodelling, the name was changed to the Queen's Hotel. Apparently, the McCabe's took up farming after they sold the hotel. The last evidence of Mr. McCabe was in a business ledger kept by W. N. Moody, a local merchant in 1883. The date of Mr. McCabe's death is unknown.

Vernon Wadsworth

In July 1860, a survey party camped at Severn and waited for John Harvey, who was to transport their provisions and equipment to Lake Muskoka. The road was so rough that teams of horses could only haul about 800 pounds of provisions. We followed Harvey's team on foot through an unsettled country. In the afternoon we reached Gravenhurst which was the termination of the travelled road. Nothing was there. Even the men who had been constructing the road, had left for their homes in Orillia and other points. There was no roadway fit for a team of horses, or even a pathway to the South Bay of Lake Muskoka, where we intended to camp and obtain canoes for travelling across Lake Muskoka. However, a roadway to the Bay shore, about a mile distant, and suitable for a wagon to pass over was quickly cut out and we camped there. Harvey brought in our food: principally flour, Chicago pork in barrels, tea and beans.

As we passed from the South Bay, into the main Muskoka Lake, at the Narrows, we saw the first encampment of Indians, one Menominee, clad in breach cloth, shirt, leggings, and moccasins, and, long black hair reaching to his waist."

John T. Harvey

Another notable pioneer was John Thompson Harvey. Born in Orillia, in 1847, he assisted his father in the running of the Royal Mail Stages, at its height, one of the most extensive lines in the Province. The stage to Gravenhurst started at Washago in the summer, and Orillia, in the winter. In 1868, Harvey settled in Gravenhurst. Before the coming of the railway, Harvey's Lines had up to 100 teams of horses on the road. But, with the coming of the railway in 1875, his business declined, and he entered the lumbering trade. However, he contracted with the railroad to draw mail and express north of Gravenhurst. In 1887, he became the town's first mayor. He died in 1923.

The Cockburn Family

Peter Cockburn was one of the first people to promote Gravenhurst and Muskoka. Cockburn was born in 1809, in Berwick-on-Tweed, England. He and his wife lived in Stormont, Ont. During the winter of 1865 – 1866, he started lumber operation in Gravenhurst, purchasing his logs from the settlers, providing winter employment. He promoted pine as a profitable commodity. He was also Postmaster from 1868 until 1873. He died in January, 1896. He is buried at Lakeview Cemetery. Cockburn had two sons, John Peter (born 1835) and Alexander Peter Cockburn (born 1837).

John Peter, like his father, was interested in the district. In 1867, John Peter took mineral specimens to Montreal for authoritative examination. Reports on the quality of copper, iron, gold and silver were good and there was considerable optimism that mining company would be established. The plan never developed. John Peter was post master of Gravenhurst from 1874 – 1877.

Alexander Peter Cockburn was born in Stormont in 1837. At the age of 20, Alexander was interested in business and politics in the County of Victoria. In 1865, the year he was reeve of Eldon, he visited Muskoka, and immediately recognized its potential. In 1866, he launched the Wenonah, establishing the Navigation Company which was to operate well into the next century. From 1867 to 1872, he represented the Riding of North Victoria (then, including Gravenhurst) in the Ontario Legislature. From 1872 to 1882, he represented Muskoka in the Legislature. From 1882 to 1887 he represented the Riding of North Ontario (then including Gravenhurst) in the House of Commons in Ottawa.

In 1867, Alexander Cockburn formed a Settlers' Association. In 1869, he supported a proposal to extend the railroad to Muskoka. Through his efforts, the Port Carling Locks and the Port Sandfield cut were completed for the navigation season of 1871. He wrote pamphlets promoting Muskoka and toured in the United States, extolling the beauty of the Muskoka District. He operated the Montreal Store, one of the first businesses in Gravenhurst. In 1905, the year of his death in Toronto, he published a book entitled, "The Political Annals of Canada". This extraordinary man deserves the title of Father of Muskoka.

The Coming of the Boats

The first decade of our history was distinguished by two important developments that had far-reaching influences on the growth of the settlement and district. The first was the coming of the boats. Until 1862, the only craft to ply the lakes were canoes used by the Indians, surveyors, explorers and early settlers. In 1862, James Cooper of North Falls, placed a large row boat on the lake. In 1863, James McCabe had a sail boat. In 1864, James Sharpe also had a sail boat. For a short time, these three people carried passengers and freight.

In 1865, A. P. Cockburn sent a report to the Hon. D'Arcy McGee, Minister of Agriculture, proposing the Government undertake road improvements and place a steamer on the lake to encourage settlement and trade. In the summer of 1866, the Wenonah made her maiden trip to North Falls. On the top of the 62 ton wood side-wheeler sidebox was painted, "Royal Mail and Express Packet". In large letters across the bottom of the paddle box was painted, Wenonah.

The Wenonah heralded the opening of the steam navigation in Muskoka and established the Muskoka Navigation Company. Benefits of the boat were felt immediately. Freight rates between Gravenhurst and Bracebridge was 15 cents per 100 pounds. A passenger could travel the distance for 50 cents.

For some time, the Wenonah operated at a loss. The “Dean”, a boat operating on Lake Couchiching in 1867, was brought to the Muskoka Lakes in 1869. Commanded by Aubrey White, she was re-named the Waubamik (white beaver). By 1878, she was taken to Lake of Bays where she continued to be known as the Dean.

The Free Grants Act

The second important reason development occurred in Muskoka was the passing of the Free Grants and Homestead Act in 1868. This act granted land to settlers who were willing to clear the land. The act was the result of the conflict of interests between the pioneer settlers and the lumbermen who were attracted to Muskoka because of the pine. To be awarded a grant of 100 acres, a settler had to be 18 years of age. Within a specified time limit, settlers had to have 15 acres under cultivation, and construct a house at least 16 by 20 feet in size. The act awarded “all pine trees, gold, silver, copper, lead, iron, or other mines or minerals to be the property of Her Majesty the Queen. The only exception was the settler using such trees to build, fence or fuel their home and land. The Government sold the timber limits it retained, and the cutting and sawing of pine logs soon became a substantial business. Now, the rush for Muskoka locations truly began, and the development of Gravenhurst received considerable impetus.

A Trip over “The Portage”

The Muskoka Road became increasingly busy. In May 1860, S. R. G. Penson, a lithographer from London, England, and an early settler of Port Carling, recorded a trip over The Portage. The Portage was quite lively and sometimes you could see whole families walking in with all their worldly goods in bundles on their backs; or a migrating farmer with a team of oxen drawing all their possessions and family. I will never forget that walk. Each of us carried either a gun or axe over our shoulder. It was for the most part, through unbroken forest. Occasionally there were clearings with hideous blackened stumps, centred around a cheerless log hut.

We looked upon these settlements with astonishment, and wondered how anyone in their senses would choose this place to live. We were glad we walked especially, when we saw one of Harvey’s stages, stuck on a long piece of corduroy road and passengers having to push the vehicle over the loose logs. Gravenhurst consisted of one store, two hotels and a few rough buildings. It was denuded of its timber by lumbermen. One could see by the size and number of the stumps that there once stood a noble forest of pines.

In 1870, the traffic on The Portage caused the Government to plank a road eight miles north of Severn up to three miles south of Gravenhurst. One million feet of white pine, three feet thick was used to construct the eight to ten foot wide road. The contractors, Cockburn and Kirkpatrick, paid settlers \$1.00 per thousand feet of timber. A gang of twelve men dug out stumps and cut the timber on the right of ways and hauled it to portable sawmills. Later, the portable sawmill was taken to Gravenhurst, where a building was constructed to house it, on the shore of Muskoka Bay.

The Dynamic Years

By 1880, at least fourteen mills were handling the logs floated down the rivers to the Muskoka Lakes and Gravenhurst. Log jams plugged the waterways. The Wenonah once was detained for seven days due to a log jam.

Charles Mickle Sr.

In November, 1929, Mr. Charles Mickle Sr. died. Truly, one of the mill magnates of the district, he had a remarkable career. He was born in 1849, in Puslinch Township, where his father operated a mill. In 1878, he went into business with Andrew Tait of Orillia, in a lumber mill on the west shore of Muskoka Bay. In 1882, he became the sole owner of the mill. In 1884, he entered a partnership with Nathaniel Dymont of Barrie, and the famous Mickle and Dymont and Son Company, came into being. In 1886, the firm built a second mill near Muskoka Wharf. The timber that fed the mills came down the South Branch of the Muskoka River, into the Bay, and, great booms including pines, spruce, hemlock, birch, tamarack, maple and ash were towed in by tugs such as the "Gracie M". So numerous were the logs, that a person could walk across the Bay on them, without serious difficulty. In 1890, the West mill, the site of the first operation, was burned. In 1894, the company produced over 17 million feet of lumber, 4 million shingles, 5 ½ million laths, and 3000 cords of slabs. By 1925, the Mickle mill was the only survivor that earlier gave Gravenhurst its nick name of The Sawdust City. The company ceased large scale production about 1927.

Mr. Mickle's wife, Emma Rowe was the daughter of Samuel Rowe, the first settler of Paisley, in Bruce County. Many will remember the splendid receptions which she hosted in her elegant home Rosehurst, on Bay Street, now operated as the Garner Lodge.

A son, Charles was born in 1879. Educated in Gravenhurst, he started to work in 1897, in the lumber camps on the Oxtongue River. In 1921, he came from Whitney to Gravenhurst to take charge of operations here.

Charles Mickle Sr. died in 1929. The last of the big operators, who cut the original forests of Muskoka, he once claimed to have cut between five and six hundred million feet of timber, in his life time. After 1930, the company continued with Samuel Dymont as President and Charles Mickle Jr., as Vice-President and operating manager. In 1932, Mrs. Mickle Sr. died at the age of 78. Just one year later, Charles Jr. was tragically killed. The old company did not survive much longer. In 1936, the mill was dismantled and its summoning whistle silenced forever.

MUSKOKA DISTRICT - Local Government Review

A research report - published Aug. 1, 1968
Donald M. Paterson – Commissioner and Research Director

Chapter 1 – The Physical and Historical Setting

The history of this area has been determined by three factors: physical setting; location and transportation. The term physical setting is used here in a broad sense to include geology, physiography, topography, soils, vegetation, climate, water coverage and drainage. The interplay of these characteristics with the location of the area, and the means of transportation available to man, provide a constant theme in the story of the development and settlement of Muskoka.

Physical Characteristics

The area is located on the southern edge of Pre-Cambrian Shield, due north of Toronto. The 45th parallel of latitude traverses the district, the line running just south of Bracebridge and Bala. Muskoka lies south of Ottawa and Montreal, the north-east corner of the district being due west of Ottawa, and east of the town of Parry Sound.

The geology and physiography of the area are typical of the Canadian Shield, with rugged rock formations composed of granite and gneisses underlying most of the area, and frequently appearing as outcroppings without soil cover. The topography is rough and irregular, with endless alternation between hill and valley. The elevation is generally highest in the north-eastern portion of the district, where the altitude ranges between 1000 and 1500 feet above sea level. The land slopes to the west and south, reaching a general elevation of about 600 feet in the vicinity of Georgian Bay. Because of the rugged terrain, the difference in elevation between adjacent valleys and hills is generally between 50 and 100 feet, but, frequently approaches 200 feet. Adjacent lakes, with significantly different surface elevations are accordingly found in several parts of the area, perhaps the best known example being the 100 foot drop between Lake of Bays and Peninsula Lake. Smaller lakes to the east of Lake of Bays are 100 to 200 feet higher again, while to the west, the altitude of the Muskoka Lakes is about 300 feet lower, with a further 150 foot drop to the level of Georgian Bay.

The soil cover of the area is generally thin, with the exception of a few pockets. It is classified by the Canadian Land Inventory as entirely unsuitable or having very severe limitations for agricultural use. The only sizable exceptions are in the vicinity of Mary Lake and Lake Vernon, with small pockets found just east of Sparrow Lake and east of Lake Muskoka in the vicinity of Bracebridge and Gravenhurst. Even these pockets are classified as having severe limitations that restrict the ranges of crops, and require special conservation practices. The soil has adverse characteristics with low to fair productivity for most crops, while specially adapted crop may do well.

The most notable feature of the vegetation is the prolific tree cover. White pine, hemlock, yellow birch, red pine and hard maple are found in the areas of adequate soil and moisture, while black spruce, cedar and tamarack grow in the most poorly drained areas. White pine, white birch, poplar and red oak are found in drier sites.

The climate is influenced by the prevailing winds which come from the west, bringing moisture from Georgian Bay and Lake Huron. The annual rainfall in Muskoka is about 35", approximately the same as in the Toronto area to the south. But, the annual snowfall, which ranges from an average of 110" in the western portion of the district, to about 100" in the eastern section, is more than double that around the western end of Lake Ontario. The average winter temperature for the region is 42 F, ranging from a mean annual minimum of -25 F., to an average summer maximum of 90 F.

The combination of adequate annual precipitation and irregular terrain has created the most notable feature of the review area. Hundreds of lakes dot the surface of the land form. The district of Muskoka lies within the large Lake Huron watershed. The subsidiary watersheds drain different parts of the area. The most important, is the Muskoka River system with its north and south branches, drain into Lake of Bays, Lake Vernon, Fairy, Peninsula and Mary Lake to the Muskoka Lakes and Georgian Bay. The second subsidiary drainage area is the Severn River and its tributary the Black River which drain to the southern portion of the district. The southern boundary of the district of Muskoka follows roughly the centre line of the Severn and Black River drainage basin.

With a total area of just over one million acres or approximately 150,000 acres, nearly 15% of the District of Muskoka is under water. This has been a factor of great significance in the historical and economic development of Muskoka. Looking toward the future, the question of water use must receive equal consideration with that of land use, if the interests of the District are to be adequately protected.

History

Four major phases are evident in the history of the area. The four phases may be referred to as: pre-settlement, settlement, lumbering and tourism. Each phase reflects a different interplay of the physical features and location of Muskoka, with the means of transportation available at the time.

Pre -Settlement era

Because of its physical characteristics, the Muskoka area provides a suitable habitat for wildlife and fish, which are abundant in the pre-settlement period. Although the area could have supported a considerable Indian population, it harboured only nomadic tribes. In Champlain's time, the Hurons lived a settled life, and cultivated the soil in the area south of Muskoka, between Georgian Bay and Lake Simcoe. They used the Muskoka area for hunting and travelled its waterways in the fur trade with the French. Although as the same linguistic group as the Iroquois to the south, the Hurons are bitter enemies of the Iroquois, but, on friendly terms with the nomadic Algonquin tribes to the north, with whom they trade furs.

In 1649, the Algonquins invaded and destroyed the Huron nation. Although the Iroquois now hold the area as far north as Lake Nipissing, they were unable to gain absolute control over the fur empire of the Hurons, and gradually, an Algonquin tribe – the Ottawas moved into the trade that the Hurons had controlled before they were destroyed. The power of the Iroquois slowly declined, until, in the latter part of the 17th century, two Algonquin tribes, the Mississaugas and the Ojibways, (also known as the Chippewas), began to move back to the area.

A Chippewa band, under a chief known as Yellowhead, was most closely associated with the Muskoka District and from the name Yellowhead, Musqua Ukie, or Mesquakie, the name Muskoka was probably derived. Yellowhead fought with the British, during the War of 1812, and afterwards, settled near Orillia, about 1830. The coming of white settlement, forced him to leave, however, and in 1838, he moved to Rama where the present Chippewa band lives on a reservation.

The original band under Yellowhead was known as the Chippewas of Lake Simcoe, and Huron. In 1836, they signed an agreement, for the sale of most of their remaining lands, in return for the interest on one third of the proceeds. They later claimed the terms of the sale and payment were unsatisfactory, and after the sale split into three bands, and purchased reserves with their own funds at Rama, Snake Island on Lake Simcoe, and Beausoleil. In

1850, a treaty was signed by the principal Ojibway Indians, ceding a large area from Penetanguishene to Lake Superior, and, although Yellowhead and his band had no part in this treaty, it was interpreted to include all the lands previously included in Muskoka. Considerable dissatisfaction remained among many of the Indians, however, and the Government finally ordered an official enquiry, which resulted in the acknowledgement of the Indian claims for further compensation. In 1923, the Government of Ontario paid \$500,000 compensation to the Chippewas and Mississaugas, for the loss of fishing, hunting and trapping rights over a 20,000 square mile area between Lake Ontario and Georgian Bay, including Muskoka.

The payment involved is a pittance of to-day's real estate values. The Indians could hardly foresee the vast use potential of the lands for other than hunting and fishing purposes. Indeed, such failure to foresee changes which the future would bring to Muskoka has been shown many times since, in the relatively short history of the District.

Of the early white explorers in the area, Samuel de Champlain was the most notable. He spent the winter of 1615 – 1616 with the Hurons, south of Muskoka.

In the days of canoe transportation, the water route across southern Ontario from Lake Ontario to Lake Huron was of great economic and military significance and Muskoka's location at the southern edge of the wedge of the Canadian Shield, which juts down into the Province between Ottawa and Georgian Bay.

Two main routes from Montreal to Lake Huron via the Ottawa River, Lake Simcoe and the Severn River were established. Many of the early explorers searched for a more direct alternative route between Ottawa and Georgian Bay.

Meanwhile, interest was growing in the prospect of colonization, and the first surveys for settlement were commenced. In 1847, a survey party under Robert Bell ran a line from the Madawaska River at Bark Lake, to the Muskoka River near the site of the present town of Bracebridge. Bells Line ran between the present townships of Ridout, McLean and Oakley, Macaulay and Draper.

During the following decade, the area was surveyed for settlement, and divided into townships and farm lots. In 1852, the Legislative Assembly voted to open the territory between Ottawa and Georgian Bay for settlement. It was realized, however, that access by water alone, would not be sufficient for this purpose. Accordingly, in 1854, the Government announced a plan of road building that would open the whole tract from the Ottawa River to Georgian Bay.

There were to be two main roads – an east and west and a road from the north, curving from Ottawa to Georgian Bay, at the mouth of the Megnetawan River and south, following Bells Line. Intersecting one or both of these, was to be a series of north – south roads. The most important roads of those actually constructed, were the Muskoka, Victoria, Bobcaygeon, Burleigh, Hastings, Addington and Frontenac. The Muskoka Road, perhaps more than any of the other colonization roads, fulfilled the dreams of those who planned it. The route was from the head of navigation on Lake Couchiching to the Grand Falls on the Muskoka River, where it was to intersect the Bells Line Road. Work began, in 1858. By 1860, the Muskoka Road was located to the Falls on the south branch of the Muskoka River, and was open for travel, to the present site of Gravenhurst. The need for a Georgian Bay port, to serve the new settlements, was also foreseen, and Parry Sound was picked for this purpose. In 1867, a road was built from Muskoka Road nine miles north of the Muskoka Falls to Parry Sound.

The Bobcaygeon Road was commenced in 1856. By 1863, the road reached the Oxtongue River in Franklin Township. The line of this road subsequently served the Eastern boundary of Muskoka District. Although a route had been surveyed, extending it northward to Lake Nipissing, the northern portion was never built. In 1871, a spur

of the Muskoka Road was constructed from a point just north of Huntsville, around Fairy Lake, Peninsula Lake and the Lake of Bays, to meet the Bobcaygeon Road not far from Dorset.

When it came time to build the Bells Line Road, it was concluded that a better route could be found, about one township south of Bell's surveyed line. Construction was begun in this location, except for a few miles at the western end, where it turns sharply north to a point on the Muskoka Road near the Great Falls. It was re-named the Peterson Road, after the surveyor of the more southerly route. Although it was reported in 1863, that this road had been completed, opening a land route between Muskoka and Ottawa, it was never satisfactory or much used, and parts were overgrown and closed to traffic by the 1870's.

The Settlement Era

In 1858, two Crown Land Agents were appointed, and in the following July, the Townships of Draper, Macaulay and Muskoka were opened for sale and to Free Grants to settlers in the vicinity of a public road. Meanwhile, the Township of Muskoka in 1858 was part of the counties of Victoria and Simcoe respectively, the line of division running along the western boundary of the townships of Ryde, Draper, Macaulay, Stephenson and Stisted. The Simcoe County Council in 1865 drew the attention of the Government to several weaknesses in the system of disposing of land for settlement, and in 1868, the Free Grants and Homestead Act was passed by the Province, establishing Free Grants to actual settlers, and imposing strict settlement duties. Following the passing of the Act, the Townships of Humphrey, Cardwell, Watt, Stephenson, Brunel, Macaulay, McLean, Muskoka and Draper were all opened for Free Grants.

The life of settlers was full of hardships, and although some successful farms were established in the areas having better soil, the battle against forest and rock was too much for settlers in many parts of the district. In many areas, where the soil was only a thin layer over the Pre-Cambrian rock, clearing the trees opened the way to erosion. The difficulty of growing crops was added by the difficulty of bringing supplies over the poor roads, and many of the settlers had to face the prospect of subsistence farming at best, augmented by lumbering during the winter months, and giving up their Land Grant, at worst.

Despite the hardships, the population grew. In 1859, there were 54 locations, and by 1861, a population of 190 was reported on the Free Grant Lands. In the late 1860's, the Provincial Government advertised the Free Grant Lands. In the late 1860's, the Provincial Government advertised the Free Grants, in Canada, Great Britain, and a number of European Countries. Partly as a result of this, the census showed a steady rise in Muskoka's population; 5,360 in 1871, 12,973 in 1881, 15,666 in 1891, and 20,971 in 1901. Although the total population was rising, the rural townships began to decline before the turn of the century. By the late 1870's, the opening of the Canadian West lured many settlers to give up their grants, and go west to start farming homesteads free of tree and rock.

The strong desire for independence motivated the early settlers to request self-government. In 1864, Morrison and Muskoka Townships were united and incorporated by a Simcoe County. They received their separate incorporations from the Province in 1864 and 1865 respectively. In 1867, Draper, Macaulay, Stephenson and Ryde were also organized into one municipality, by the County of Victoria, and Oakley was added in the following year. That area was found to be too large, however, and in 1869, the settlers petitioned the province to form separate municipalities.

With the organization of local governments, the settlers obtained a means of looking after their own local affairs and an official channel for the expression of grievances to the Province. The division of the District between the two counties of Simcoe and Victoria, was the first such grievance to call forth local action. The settlers found the obligation of going to Orillia or Lindsay, to settle even minor court actions, an intolerable burden. In 1868,

Morrison, Muskoka, Monck, Watt, Humphrey, Stephenson, Brunel, Macaulay and Draper petitioned the Government for a Division Court and Registry Office to be set up in Bracebridge. Although this request was met, the administration of justice in general, remained with the two counties. In 1869, this administrative division proved so inconvenient, that a petition was presented, asking that the townships in Muskoka be united into a junior county, temporarily annexed to Simcoe. A bill to this effect was introduced into the legislature, but failed to pass.

The administration of justice was a burden for the counties, as well as the settlers, and during the latter half of the 1870's, Simcoe County protested to the Province the cost of administering justice in an unorganized district from which it derived no revenue. A decade was to pass however, before Muskoka was established as a District, in 1888, separated from Simcoe and Victoria.

The Lumbering Era

Muskoka was fortunate in having a plentiful supply of timber available when the export market was strong. When cutting first began, the demand on the British market was for square, pine timber for ship masts or rafters. This required the tallest, soundest trees of good diameter. Great waste resulted from disregarding logs which did not meet the requirements from the squaring. This demand, which was strong, when cutting first began in Muskoka, reached its peak around 1865. It then declined with the British demand for planks about three or four inches thick. Timbering in Muskoka reached its peak toward the turn of the century. At first, the timber was taken out by stream and river, but the numerous falls and rapids in the District, made such timber driving difficult. Railways brought great development in the lumber trade. By the 1880's, Gravenhurst had 14 sawmills and was the centre for the industry, following the construction of the Northern Railway to Gravenhurst, in 1875.

The interests of the settlers and lumbermen were generally in opposition and although many of the settlers had to augment their income, by working in lumber camps during the winter months, there was much friction over the question of timber rights on settled lands.

There is no doubt however, of the role the lumbering played, in opening up the country, and justifying the early extension of the railway into the district.

The Tourist Era

Although the earliest tourists began to arrive with the construction of the Muskoka Road, and the numbers began to grow when regular stage coach service was established on this road, the first phase of the tourist industry in Muskoka began in 1866, when the first steamer on the Muskoka Lakes – the Wenonah – was launched. This was followed by other steamers on the Muskoka Lakes, by the construction of the Northern Railway to Gravenhurst in 1875, to Bracebridge in 1885, and Huntsville in 1886, and by the launching of a steamer in Port Sydney in 1877. The construction of Locks at Port Carling and between Fairy and Mary Lakes, and of a canal between Fairy and Peninsula Lakes, along with a short railway between Peninsula Lake and the Lake of Bays completed a railway steamboat transportation system which opened up all the large lakes in the District.

This system made it possible for the well-to-do to travel in comfort to the rugged and beautiful north, and ushered in Ontario's first boom in tourism, which coincided with the period of general economic prosperity of the Great Resort Hotels such as Milford Bay House, Wingberry House, Stratton House, The Beaumaris Hotel, and Brighton Beach Hotel. It was also a period of summer home development, when Muskoka became firmly established as a thoroughly desirable place to vacation.

The economic depression of 1913, and the years of the first world war, marked the end of the first tourist boom, and although many of the large resorts survived and prospered again during the 1920's another significant change in transportation began to make its influence felt during the post war decade. This was the growth in car ownership, and was to restore road transportation to the dominant role it had played for members of the middle class. The period of the 1920's marked the beginning of a period of transition to a more egalitarian society. The transition continued through the depression, the 1930's and the second world war.

The second tourist boom of the 1920's saw the emergence of the middle class resorts on Lake Simcoe and Georgian Bay, and a shift in the clientele of the great Muskoka Houses, to include more of the newly rich and middle class. In the latter part of the decade, the influx of American tourists reached a peak which was not attained again until after the Second World War. The depression of the 1930's ended this second recreational boom, just as a depression had ended the first.

The 30's, followed by the war years, may be regarded as the third phase in the history of tourism. Although this was not a boom period, it brought significant changes which foreshadowed many of the characteristics of the third boom which followed the war.

The influx of American tourists dropped sharply during the depression, and began to recover in the latter part of the 1930's. Money was still scarce, and the resort hotels were expensive for most vacationers. The situation started a market for cheaper tourist accommodation such as roadside and lakefront cabin, snack stands, tenting campgrounds, and cheap sites for a small cottage of one's own, on or near a lake or river. Interest in Crown Land rose to a higher level than had been reached during the boom of the 20's. The common feature of all these developments was their accessibility by road – perhaps followed by a short trip in a small outboard motor boat, and accompanying the developments were the growing Provincial and Municipal road budgets, which, by the early 1940's, had made almost all of the desirable part of the Review Area accessible by car.

The Second World War, with its resulting restrictions on building materials and gasoline, marked the end of this third phase. In the post war period, the third boom, both in the economy and recreational activity began, a boom that has persisted to the present day, and in Muskoka, as in the resort areas of Ontario generally, the phases of this boom are apparent.

Resort developments which began in the 1930's either continued or were raised and the lake frontage was sold for private cottages. The number of motels, snack bars, service stations increased. The population of the urban areas in southern Ontario and northern United States grew at an explosive rate along with incomes and leisure time.

Transportation made resort areas in Muskoka more accessible along with foreign travel for the average family.

Camping in Provincial Parks became an attractive holiday for families of the "baby boom" generation. Costs of owning a cottage mounted, particularly within reasonable travel time of the large cities, and as the cost of taking a family to a commercial resort also mounted, with higher prices, and the size of the family, a camping boom emerged.

At the same time, many vacationers began to seek more variety in their travels, trying something new each year. In the 1950's tourists spent more money than ever in different ways and in different places. The Muskoka tourist establishments faced stiff competition. Attractions which had been adequate in the 1950's, increasingly fell short of the standard expected by a more demanding market.

The recession of the early 1960's, along with the growing impact of these changes in tourism began the second phase of the post war period of Tourism in Muskoka. Cottage development was a mainstay of the Area's tourist economy. The Muskoka resort operators found themselves faced with stiff competition for the tourist dollar on the one hand, and continuously rising costs, on the other. They obviously needed to update their establishments, and gain the efficiency of larger scale operations, in order to meet their increased competition. But, how could they afford to do so? The problem was made more difficult by the reluctance of investors in lending institutions, to risk money in a type of enterprise which traditionally has only a short summer season in which to meet expenses and show a profit.

Added to these problems, are a host of others, arising from varying pressures for growth and change. Large scale industrial development, threat of pollution, the need for higher standards of planning and development control, pressure for public park facilities and water access points, all confront tourism in Muskoka as we enter the last third of the 20th century. The population forecasts for the urban areas leave little doubt as to the pressure for change that Muskoka will have to deal with in the foreseeable future.

Since the decline of the lumber Industry around the beginning of this century, tourism became the mainstay of the District's economy. In its natural endowments, its location, its transportation connections with the heavily populated areas to the south, there is no doubt that Muskoka can remain one of the prime recreational areas in the Province. This need does not rule out other activities which would diversify the economy but, it does emphasize the need for effective, long range planning, if man is to make the best use of the Area's many assets.