

## THE CAMPBELL FAMILY

Early in April 1831, Mr. and Mrs. Duncan Campbell with their family of five left Kilmartin Parish, Argyleshire, Scotland on a sailing vessel. After a long and tiresome trip they reached Quebec and by another circuitous route landed at Port Stanley June 27th, 1831. On the same vessel across the Atlantic, came another man with his wife and family, - Donald Leach. These two men became friends and planned to settle side by side in the new land. For some reason they separated at Quebec, and Mr. Leach reached Port Stanley three days previous to Mr. Campbell. Donald Leach secured the only one hundred acre lot available on the Edgeware Road, Lot #9; now owned by Cyril Williams. When the Campbells arrived they were able to get the one hundred acres, Lot #12 Concession #10, North Edgeware Road. Unpretentious cabins were built and soon there was a beaten track between the Leach and Campbell homes.

Mr. Campbell's brother Alex learned the trade of a stone mason in Scotland, and spent a few years here with his brother and during this time superintended the building of a brick house in 1856. This house was replaced in 1918.

At an early age one of the Campbell sons was badly injured assisting in clearing a farm his elder brother had settled in North Dorchester. A stretcher was made of the boughs of trees and neighbors carried him home on foot a distance of many miles. He recovered from the injury and learned the trade of a shoe-maker, and built a shop on the farm at the corner of the laneway and road, where it became a notable place for the young men to gather in the evenings to discuss the topics of the day and gossip an hour away.

The farm is now owned by Ferguson Campbell, no relation of the original owner.

Carrie Campbell McLellan.

(Mrs. D.A. McLellan.)

*March 10, 1951.*

1966-----

The Ferguson Campbell family still reside on this farm settled on by Duncan Campbell, (no relation) in 1831.

## THE CURTIS FAMILY.

In 1832 Mr. and Mrs. Daniel Curtis and two children, Richard aged two years and William aged nine weeks, left Devonshire England for Quebec. After a voyage of seven weeks and three days, they reached Canada and arrived at Port Stanley in three months from the time they left England. During this same year they purchased a farm from Thomas Penhale, consisting of one hundred acres, being the north half of lot ten, concession ten. This was when the forest presented an unbroken front.

St. Thomas was then a village, consisting of two stores a tavern and a few dwelling houses, and trips to this village were made on foot through the medium of an Indian trail. Game was very plentiful then and consisted of deer, wild turkey and partridges. Salt Creek afforded a rendezvous for the deer in quest of rock salt, which skirted the borders of the stream. Packs of wolves were frequently seen in the sugar bush in those days when the people were converting the sap of the maple into syrup.

An incident is told by Mr. Coll Sinclair of Bridgeburg now seventy-five years of age, who still remembers when a very small boy living on the tenth concession, and coming through the trail in the woods to visit the Curtis family. He recalls hearing Mrs. Curtis tell how she actually met a wolf in the ravine near Salt Creek. On being asked why the wolf did not eat her up she replied: "I'm too thin for good eating. A wolf likes two hundred pounders."

Before the forests were converted into fertile fields, the primitive crop was corn which furnished an appetizing bill of fare when made into meal. The mode of operation was to excavate a cavity in a block of wood to the depth of one foot, when a pile driver was applied, crushing the corn which was then used for "mush and johnny cake." A few years later a grist mill was built at Long Point, eighty miles away. The grist, consisting of one half bushel of wheat was carried by the men to this mill, the journey taking several days. Later a mill was built at Union. Later still, flour purchased by the barrel and taken home by installments.

Mrs. William Millman, now eighty-four years of age visited the Curtis family in those early days and tells me she remembers that Mrs. Curtis then walked to St. Thomas with her basket of butter and eggs on her arm. She also remembers the fireplace in one end of the quaint cabin, where the three legs of the iron pot were surmounted with a large receptacle for the dough. All the cooking

For the family was done in this fireplace.

Here the neighbors used to congregate to indulge in "creks" during the long winter evenings. Mr. Curtis died in 1860 and his wife and two sons, William and Salathiel carried on with the work on the farm. Mrs. Curtis died in 1900 at the age of ninety-five years.

So, let us honour the memory of those pioneers, and when sometimes we grumble by reason of the hard times, we would get much comfort if we would look back on conditions as they existed one hundred years ago, and consider the hardships and the serious situations that confronted the people then.

Mae Curtis

(Mrs. Salathiel Curtis)

*August 18, 1932*

1966 -----

Great Grandson, Stanley Curtis and family, reside on this farm, settled on by Daniel Curtis in 1832.

MRS. ELIZABETH CURTIS

18~~60~~<sup>93</sup>--1900

The history of the life of Mrs. Elizabeth Curtis was published in one of the St. Thomas papers, of that time, the Times or Journal, written by a local writer.--Nov. 5th, 1897.

"Daniel Gurtis was born in Devonshire England the fourth day of May in the year of our Lord 1800."

"Elizabeth Curtis, his wife, was born in Devonshire, England, the sixth day of October in the year of our Lord 1805."

Turning over a leaf the old fashioned family Bible I read next this notice.

"Daniel Curtis died in the year of our Lord 1860." And the dear old lady who handed me the Bible was "Elizabeth Curtis, born the sixth day of October 1805" and to day is the fifth day of November, 1897. Thirty-seven years a widow and sixty-three years living on the same farm North Yarmouth, and when she settled on that farm first she was a married woman with a son nearly four years old and another younger son (William) is living with her still, though he is a grandfather. Think those facts over again, dear reader, for they are pregnant with interest. They sum up the life history of one of those early settlers who made this country. What a scattering few of them are living now only those know who have made this a study.

Two of the most beautiful objects in all of nature's

kingdom are a young, blushing girl and an old, silver-haired lady on whom age sets but lightly. The first typifies the hope and promise of sunrise, the latter has all the mellowed beauty of a quiet sunset. Thrice happy is the one who at sunset looks back on such a well spent life as Elizabeth Curtis can. Let us try to trace that life dimly not in the twilight hour.

Daniel Curtis and Elizabeth Millman were born and raised near the same little Devonshire village, and in the then rustic fashion of old England they were betrothed for several years before marriage. They were married in the quaint parish church of Holswrth one pleasant day in February, <sup>1827</sup>1828, and

"So they were wed and merrily rang the bells,  
And merrily ran the years, such happy years--  
Those happy years of health and contentment,  
And mutual love and honorable toil."

But bye and bye, wafted across the Atlantic, came the news of a far off land of promise called Upper Canada and gradually this news sifted into the little village of Holsworthy till it reached our young married couple. Two sons, Richard, born 1829, and William, born 1832, had meanwhile come into their little home, and to a man with a family, this new country Canada seemed to offer greater opportunities than old England, dear and all as it was. A bare living was possible in England, but they had heard that in Upper Canada they could get a farm of

their own for little more than the clearing of it up. Accordingly in 1833, we find our young English couple on board a brig bound for Quebec and exactly seven weeks and three days after sailing, their good ship anchored under the shadows of that celebrated fortress. Part of the way by boat and part by wagon and oxen, they journeyed on from Quebec till they reached Port Stanley, more than three months after they had parted with their friends in the little Devonshire village at home.

On landing and taking an inventory of their possessions they found that they had just three sovereigns (\$14.58) in money, after paying their fares, to begin life afresh in a new land. But if they had but little money, they had at least stout English hearts prepared to do battle with the woods. Yet neither of them would be considered hardy as such things go, more especially Mrs. Curtis herself. This may seem an absurd statement to make about a woman who is still living at ninety-two years of age and able to eat her three meals a day, but it is literally true. For more than sixty years Mrs. Curtis has had stomach troubles and she herself states that even in girlhood she was considered to have a delicate frame. She cannot remember when she was not ailing and besides about fourteen years ago she met with a runaway in which her hip was fractured. Yet, despite all these drawbacks, she still hobbles around with a cane at ninety-two, does all the family mending in the same old-fashioned style as seventy years ago, though she tells with regret that she cannot

help to get the meals or wash the dishes any more. "Just think of it," she said to me with the Devonshire indignation "I have not been in St. Thomas and me trading there for more than sixty years."

"St. Thomas would be only a village when you landed at Port Stanley in 1833?" I said.

"Oh, indeed, not even that much," she answered, "there were just two stores and a tavern down near Kettle Creek and four or five houses--a queer-looking place to be sure,"--she added with an amused smile.

"Well, Mr. William Gilbert, who died here the other day, used to know us in England and he wrote us that he had a farm picked out for us near his own, but when we got there it had already been taken up. This farm where we now live was clergy reserve land, but we bought it from Mr. Thomas Penhale. So we moved here in 1833 and here I have been ever since. I don't expect to ever leave here now till"--the poor old lady's voice broke down as she looked out across the ripened autumn fields to the distant hills, she was no doubt thinking of that other Home for tired ones beyond the blue, she was weeping softly to herself.

"It would be all woods between here and St. Thomas at that time," I suggested after her grief had had its way.

"Yes, all woods, beautiful woods of beech and maple with walnut and butternut trees along Kettle creek," she said half gayly again. "Many a day your mother and I"--never before had I felt so proud of my pioneer ancestors--

"tramped out through the bush to St. Thomas, up hill and down following the Indian's path, each one of us carrying maple sugar or syrup to sell, for money must be had somehow, and in those days it was pretty scarce, I tell you."

"But game was plenty at that time, Mrs. Curtis, and the settlers would not want for food, would they?"

"No, I cannot say that they wanted for food, but money was so scarce--there was very little in Upper Canada altogether, and we had to have some money to pay our taxes. Even the stores in St. Thomas hated to pay out any money, and it was very difficult to get hold of. But game was plenty, as you say. At certain seasons of the year the woods were alive with wild turkeys and partridge. Deer too, swarms of them back there by Salt Creek (a little stream discharging into Kettle Creek) and wolves as well. I have seen droves of them in the daytime myself in our sugar bush."

"Bear, too, I suppose, Mrs. Curtis?"

"No, I never saw a bear in the woods myself, but I remember hearing about the Indians killing bears out towards where Belmont is now. My husband was more of a worker than a hunter, so that we did not know as much about game as many of the other settlers."

"Were people as happy then as they are now, Mrs. Curtis?"

"Far happier," she answered with emphasis, "for then one was good as the other, but now some people think they are better than others, and there is too much show now. I am told that women in the cities now make a stiff call on



each other and leave their visiting cards," and the old lady chuckled to herself as she thought of the funny sight. "Now years ago when I wanted to see them when I was not feeling well, I just raised the window and waved my hand or a handkerchief, and they would be over to see what was the matter. No visiting cards, either."

"But you had to work real hard?"

"Of course we did," she said, sharply, "what did we come for, but to work. The woods was no place for lazy people. Your mother and I alone made four hundred pounds of maple sugar and a barrel full of syrup in one spring, and took care of our children, too. We took turns in minding the children, No, we didn't sit down and fold our hands and cry very much. Times were too busy for that."

"Do you remember the year of the rebellion, Mrs. Curtis?"

"I ought to, for everybody was half frightened to death. Why, old Mr. H--kept his gun every night in bed beside him for fear of the rebels. My husband did not meddle with affairs at all, he just kept working away on his clearing and you see the result." The dear old lady looked out again on their splendid, well-tilled farm with a degree of honest pride in the success of their joint effort, for her sons are now well-known as among the most well-to-do of North Yarmouth farmers.

"I heard that you had a talk with old Mrs. Mills and put a piece in the paper about it," she said suddenly, turning from the window.

"Yes, she is a wonderful old lady, indeed," I said,