

All of the teachers were men, one of whom was a Dr. Simpson. The teacher would copy on the board and the pupils would have to imitate as best they could.

There was only the Presbyterian Church in Fingal in those days and the family would ride there in a lumber wagon. Duncan Thomson and his wife Margaret (McGregor) Thomson along with a small child walked to Fingal one Sunday from the 14th Concession of Yarmouth to attend communion services. The Paterson men were sons-in-law of the Thomsons. There was a Methodist Church on the Baker property and a Baptist Church opposite the 11th Concession on Lot 8. Many people attended a singing school that was held in the Baptist Church. There was a plank across the creek for people to use instead of going around by the bridge. Mrs. McPherson whose maiden name was Bucke, remembered going to the Baptist Church when a small girl. One December she was baptized in the creek after the ice was chopped away; those baptized would go to the Paterson house to change their clothes and get warm.

About the year 1838 a small log church was built on the 11th Concession, North of Yarmouth Centre, by the Presbyterians of North Yarmouth, but it was not until the 4th day of September, 1855 that the first communion was held at Kilmartin Church by the Rev. Duncan McMillan of Aldborough.

The settlers had to clear and build the road in front of their farms. The low swampy places had to be built with logs lying side by side, corduroy roads.

Land was around \$2  $\frac{1}{2}$  an acre and payments had to be made in London, as Elgin was in Middlesex County at that time. Many farmers walked to London to make payments; John Paterson remembers making that trek.

The neighbours were wonderful in those early days, helping with logging, quilting and other bees. There was



usually a jar of whiskey which cost around 25 cents. The women would carry eggs to St. Thomas and trade them for essentials.

When the Paterson children were young a new log house was built with several rooms and an upstairs. This building was well built, had plaster between the logs and is still in a good state. About 1875 a two storey brick house was built and is well preserved. A Mr. Jones built a mill on the 11th Concession, Lot 7 about  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile west of the Paterson homestead but ran out of money before finishing it. He was a veteran of the battle of Waterloo and was a very good friend of the Patersons. When money gave out he, induced by the lure of free land in Illinois, decided to go and investigate. He came back in a few months telling of land with no trees. He decided to go there and tried to interest the Patersons in taking up free land there also. Many settlers went to Illinois but the Patersons stayed. Mr. Jones sold his mill to Mr. Locke and left for Illinois. There was a mill at Union where wool was made into rolls, ready to be spun into yarn on the spinning wheel. This yarn was used to make many of the clothes used in those days.

John Paterson, the elder of the boys, at the age of 28 in 1862 bought the farm east of the old homestead, Lot 10, from William Locke and in 1870 was married to Catharine Thomson from the 14th Concession of Yarmouth. There were five girls and two boys in the family. A log house was on the farm, but in 1873 a brick house was built. There was good fishing in Kettle Creek, trout, bass, and suckers. Game was very plentiful too. Maple syrup was on the table almost every day.

John Paterson distinctly remembers huge flocks of passenger pigeons darkening the sky like clouds. They lived on beech nuts which were very plentiful in North Yarmouth but by 1895 they were extinct.



One hundred and thirty three years after the original farm, Lot 9, Concession 11 was settled in 1834 by Alexander Paterson and Catharine Fraser Paterson it still remains in the Paterson family and is owned by a grandson, Dan Paterson.

*C. Vera Ferguson*

*Chloe Lewis*

*May 1, 1967.*



RELIC OF THE PAST



Few of the log cabin homes built by the early settlers still remain, but of those which do, one located on the 100 acre farm of Mr. Daniel Patterson on the 11th Concession of Yarmouth Township is still in excellent condition. Built when Mr. Patterson's grandfather, Alexander Patterson, first settled on the farm in 1832, the cabin is a masterpiece of craftsmanship. According to Mr. Patterson, four brothers used to tour the area building log cabins and the one on his farm was their work. An interesting feature of the cabin is the dovetail corner joints, each a close, tight fit. The logs themselves have been hewn square and smooth with an axe the only tool. A stairway leads to the upper floor of the cabin which is now being used as a store by Mr. Daniel Patterson.

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COLIN SMITH. LOT 14, CON. 11 NORTH YARMOUTH...HIGHVIEW FARM.

Leaving the parish of Kilmartin, Argyleshire, Scotland, in the year 1831 where his family were the millers and farmers, Colin Smith and his wife Margaret Gillies spent their first winter in Canada in Glengarry at the home of relatives. Here their son John was born in the following spring, May 15th, 1832. Two children had come with them, their daughter Margaret, eight years old, and a young boy, a cousin, one James Brown who had hidden on the boat and wasn't discovered until too far out from land to swim back! Delayed as they had been by autumn storms on the Atlantic, the season was far advanced and the Glengarry cousins would not allow the newcomers to attempt the long journey into Upper Canada. Hospitality indeed reigned in pioneer days.

Reaching Port Stanley where there was no beach formed, Kettle Creek being the entrance into the wilderness, it is told that the men from the boats sat on the ground and wept. They were terrified of this new land. The trees of the formidable forest were everywhere so large, so high and leafy that the sky could not be seen.

On their way to join the Gillies relatives at New Glasgow, they were honored to encounter the renowned pioneer, Nellie Campbell, who drew their attention to the possibilities of North Yarmouth, for she had heard that the good land westward was taken up. After visiting "the friends" in the Rodney district, the Smith family returned to the St. Thomas district and lived four years on the Yarmouth-Malahide Townline, on the farm now owned by Mr. Herb Thomson.

Colin Smith acquired the Clergy Reserve land south side, Con. 11, Lot 14, North Yarmouth in 1837. This farm was hard to clear. It had stands of oak, lumpy clay knolls and swampy spaces (which settlers dreaded on account of the "ague" or "the shakes" akin to the recurring malaria and they suspected the swamps). The son John contracted the ague. Every household in early Elgin days had an "ague" sufferer. But cleared and drained such clay lands made magnificent wheat farms.

No other member of the Smith family came to Canada. This pioneer Colin Smith is said to have enlivened social gatherings with his bent for music. He could sing and entertain, and no one could tread a lighter measure in the dance. The Scottish families reserved their vest efforts to celebrate the "old" New Year, January 12th, a day still marked in the Smith family. On this occasion, in earlier years, certain Gaelic songs were an offering. The old New Year was from the Justinian Calendar, the calendar preceeding our Gregorian Calendar, and their songs referred to the events in Scottish history that brought on the dispersal of the clans.

Of the two Smith children, the girl Margaret married Angus Taylor of Belmont (grandfather of Bert Taylor) and the son John married Catharine McGregor, Glen Lyon, Concession 10, North Yarmouth. The



boy, James Brown, mentioned earlier, was the father of the Rev. Jas. Brown, minister of Belmont-Kilmartin, 1886, 1891.

Mr. and Mrs. John Smith had eight children, Colin, Ann, Margaret, Catharine, John, Flora, Mary and Hattie, all but the last named were born in the log cabin. Gaelic was the first language in the home. The children were baptized in Kilmartin Church and all attended the "Glen" school and spent most of their lives in North Yarmouth.

The farm last owned by Bruce Smith was sold in 1944.

These worthy pioneers, Colin and Margaret Gillies Smith are buried in the very south-west corner of Kilmartin Cemetery, one half mile from the land they cleared.

Hattie Ferguson Shaw

(Mrs. W.J. Shaw)

*Feb. 19, 1953*

1966 -----

Mr. Olsen purchased the farm settled on by Colin Smith in 1837, from Bruce Smith, and later sold it to Keith Davis, who also owns the adjoining farm first settled on by Duncan McGregor.



## THE TAYLOR FAMILY

Archibald Taylor and his wife Mary McBride, were both born and brought up in Skipneso, Kintyre in Argyleshire, Scotland.

He worked as a fisherman until the spring of 1831, when they and their family of five boys set sail for Canada, where it was thought there would be better prospects for the growing boys. The eldest at this time was sixteen years old. They were also accompanied by his mother, a lady about eighty years of age.

The trip across the ocean was a great undertaking in those days. The only means of travelling was by sailing vessel, which was dependent on the wind and weather. In this case the journey took thirteen weeks. Each passenger had to supply his own food, and because it had taken so long to cross, both crew and passengers were on short rations before land was reached. With the fore-thought of an old sailor, Grandfather had provided an extra barrel of flour, which supplied the needs of his own family, and enabled him to share with some of his fellow passengers.

After disembarking at Montreal, they had to make the trip through the lakes to Port Stanley, the nearest landing place to the Talbot Settlement, where his brother, Gilbert and sister, Mrs. Alexander Love, were living. Here they were met by his brother, who had as the only means of conveyance a horse and saddle, borrowed from a neighbor to take the family and their belongings a distance of thirty



miles to the sister's farm on the Talbot road and the townline between Dunwich and Aldborough. After borrowing enough money from his brother to pay their passage from Montreal they started on the trail through the woods, the grandmother on the horse with her son, Gilbert, leading and the little family following on foot. It would be hard to imagine the feelings of these parents as they trudged through the forest in a new land with nothing to supply the needs of their family. After getting his mother comfortably settled, the brother returned to Port Stanley for his sister-in-law and youngest child and brought them to his home. Four weeks after their arrival, the only daughter was born.

After making arrangements for the oldest boys to do chores on the neighboring farms and go to school, the father left them and walked through the woods to Hamilton. Here he obtained a job using a whip saw in the lumber yard where his brother, Neil worked. The logs were rolled out on an elevated tram-way. One man stood above and the other beneath and the logs were cut with a saw similar to a cross-cut saw. The timber thus sawed was used in building boats.

In the spring of 1832, with the money earned in this way, he returned to his family and after making the first payment he received the title to settle on the Taylor homestead, Lot 14, concession 11, Yarmouth Township, the farm now, formerly owned by Gilbert E. Taylor. The nearest they could bring their belongings by either horses or oxen was a point about where the first over head bridge east of St. Thomas, on the Talbot Road, is now situated. From there they had to be carried. A small log cabin was built on the