

## FOREWORD TO CHAPTER ON SCHOOLS

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The Past will not die so long as its tales are passed on from one generation to the next. Stories heard from those now gone must be shared; especially those of pioneers and their early and difficult years.

From an article "Schools and Dominies", written by Mr. Archie McColl for the Rodney Mercury, June 9, 1892, we learn that the schools have played a most valuable part in the development of this area.

The first school, called "The 52 School", was built on the Aldborough and Orford townline, near Fifty-Two Creek. Some very able teachers gave of their time and energy there. One in particular, (we believe him to be the first teacher) was named Kennedy, and later became a Presbyterian Church minister. While Mr. Kennedy was at this school, an attempt was made by a Port Glasgow merchant, named Robert Young, to open a private school. He had a governess come to live in their home and teach their children, and some others, but this did not last very long. The Old Country idea that private tuition was desirable did not lend itself to a community short of money, and not given to aristocratic standards.

High ideals must have been the motive for any teacher in those days, for the salaries paid were no inducement. Twelve to fourteen dollars a month, with board and laundry to pay out of that, was the standard salary, until the early 1840's when a new system was started by the Township School Board.

This was a method of eliminating the cost of board and laundry to the teacher, who was expected to spend one week at a time, moving from home to home where his pupils lived. Whether the people liked the teacher, or had accommodation for him, mattered not--and it

was unpardonable for the teacher to slight a family. Certainly there always was variety--for the teacher often shared a bunk with two to four of his pupils--not daring to complain to anyone.

In order to better this state of affairs, the Township was finally able to use Clergy Reserve monies to supplement the teacher's salary. In 1843, Mr. James Campbell was treasurer of the School Board. A letter sent to him from London, Ontario, enclosing Aldborough's share of Clergy Reserve money for that year (30 pounds 9 shillings) went to "Mosa Post Office", as there was no Aldborough Post Office. The postage was four and a half pence (nine cents).

A Clergy Reserve log Presbyterian Manse was built at Port Glasgow, west of the corner on the north side of the road. On the following page are printed portions of an article in the Encyclopedia of Canada, Volume 2, which makes clear what the Clergy Reserve apportionments were.

Mr. A. McLachlan taught in a school on Lot 1, Concession 13, near the present S.S.1. He later became the first School Inspector for Aldborough.

Mr. A. Buchanan, an uncle of Mrs. E.G. Lusty, was the first teacher of the school on Black's Lane, on the 10th Concession.

The McBride school was on Furnival Road near Middle Street. It is still in use as a house on the old McGugan farm, one concession South; it has had a lean-to added. As a school it was closed about 1872. It was here that exciting meetings took place in Ward 4 around election times. It is said that men were taken by some one having a claim against them to the poll, and told how to vote.

Written by: Mrs. H.J.C. Kotzenmeyer

## CLERGY RESERVES

(In connection with early school history)

"Article in Encyclopedia of Canada v.2"

The name applied to those lands set aside in Upper Canada and Lower Canada under the Constitutional Act of 1791 "for the support and maintenance of a Protestant clergy". It was laid down in the Act that these should be "equal in value to the seventh part" of all the lands granted, which meant that they were to be one-eighth in value of the whole.

Actually, however, there was set apart for the Clergy Reserves one-seventh of the lands granted. Out of these lands, or the proceeds of their sale, the provincial governments were authorized to erect and endow parsonages and rectories "according to the establishment of the Church of England"; and this provision was interpreted to mean that the phrase "a Protestant clergy" signified the clergy of the Church of England.

In Upper Canada, where the majority of the population belonged to other denominations than the Church of England, this interpretation caused trouble from an early date. In 1822, the Presbyterians, acting on the opinion of the law officers of the Crown that the Church of Scotland, as an established church under the Act of Union between England and Scotland, was entitled to share in the Clergy Reserves, demanded, and received, some support from the Reserves.

Other denominations also demanded a share, on the ground that the Reserves were intended for the support of "a Protestant clergy"; and the question became a bone of contention in Upper Canada. William Lyon Mackenzie once expressed the opinion that the Clergy Reserves were the most important single cause of the Rebellion of 1837. In addition to the religious grievance, they provided an economic grievance. They were allotted in such a way that, with the Crown Lands and other lands held out of cultivation, they interrupted the continuity of settlement and made difficult the expansion of roads. The province became a sort of chequer-board in which the black squares represented unimproved lands.

This economic grievance, added to the religious, no doubt explains the feeling which the Clergy Reserves roused.....  
In 1854 an Act for secularization was passed. (The Church of England and the Presbyterians, however, retained the endowments that had been granted to them.)

The proceeds of Clergy Reserves were formed into the Upper Canada Municipalities Fund and the Lower Canada Municipalities Fund. The moneys forming the said Funds were paid to the Receiver General who would apportion them among the several County and City Municipalities.

HISTORY  
of  
SCHOOL SECTION NO. 1

Part I

S.S.No.1 is in the south west corner of Aldborough Township, and is comprised of Lots A,B,C,D,1,and 2, and 3 in Concessions 12,13,& 14; also same lots (south half) in Concession 11.

The foundation of this section's history was deeply laid by the privations, hardships and struggles of pioneer folk, for Captain Archibald Gillies, who located on Lot 1, Con. 13, in 1816, was the first white man to blaze a trail through the unbroken forests of southern Aldborough. During the same year Peter Forbes located on Lot 1, Con. 12; Neil Haggart on Lot 3, Con. 13; Gregor McGregor on Lot A, Con. 12; and Thomas Ford on Lot B, Con. 12. These families had come from Scotland and temporarily settled in Caledonia, N.Y.; but after the War of 1812, on invitation from Colonel Talbot, they came to Canada.

In 1818, a number of families came direct from Scotland, among them Peter McKellar, who settled on Lot 1, Con. 11.

The descendants of Captain Gillies have played an important part in the political life of Aldborough, and a grandson, John G. Gillies, was a teacher in this district.

Thomas Ford had 8 sons and one daughter, who died in her early teens and was the first person to be buried in Ford's Cemetery, which was located on the farm. It is interesting to note that Norman A. Ford, a great-grandson of Thomas Ford now lives on the old farm, and that his two sons Mac and Thomas N. are the sixth generation of Fords to live there.

The Ford families always took an active interest in the educational life of the community, and Thomas N. Ford was Secretary-Treasurer of S.S.NO.1 for over 40 years.

Peter McKellar's oldest son became Hon. Archibald McKellar, M.P. for Wentworth County, and at his death was Sheriff.

To these and other pioneers we owe a great debt of gratitude and honour, for with their high ideals, and through their constant struggles to gain for their families the best things in life, we now enjoy our splendid liberty and perhaps the best educational system in the whole world.

To get any education in those early days was very difficult, for until 1835 there were no schools; classes were held in some homes; the teachers were uneducated; text books were scarce;- Mayor's Speller and the New Testament were the only ones used; and long distances had to be travelled. Some pupils walked as far as Clearville, on the West, and New Glasgow, on the East.

The first record of S.S.No.1 Aldborough, that we have been able to find, was that a union section was formed of S.S.No.1 Aldborough, and S.S.No.8 Orford, and a school was built on Lot A Con. 13 Aldborough, possibly around 1850. The land on which this school was erected was given free, but was to return to the farm when no longer required for educational purposes.

Very little information can be obtained about the history of this school, but some of the teachers who taught there were: Miss Gunn, from Wallacetown; Mr. Duncan McIntyre, from New Glasgow (about 1869); Miss Dundas; Mr. McBride; Mr. McTavish; Miss Hattie Potts, who was the last teacher in Union School and first teacher in new S.S.No.1 opened on Silver Street.

In 1871, a School Law Improvement Act was passed in Ontario, and in 1873, school sections were re-arranged in south Aldborough. The

Union section was broken up and a new S.S.No.1 Aldborough formed.

This section, No.1, now comprised of Lots A,B,C,D,1,2,and 3 in Concessions 10,11,12,13, and 14, also south half of same lots in Concession 9. Records show that when this section was formed in 1873, S.S.No.4 Aldborough was broken up, but there is no record as to where the building of S.S.4 was located; however it must have been within the newly formed S.S.No.1, for a controversy arose as to keeping the teacher who had already been engaged to teach in S.S.No.4 for 1874.

On the advice of Mr. A.J. Butler, who at that time was Inspector of schools for West Elgin, it was decided to keep both schools (Union School at townline, and Red School No.4) open until a new school in S.S.No.1 could be built.

Miss Mary E. Leitch, who had been teaching in S.S.No.4, was engaged to teach there for part of 1874 at \$20.00 per month.

Miss Hattie Potts was engaged to teach in Union School at the same salary for the same period.

The first trustees in S.S.No.1 Aldborough in 1874 were: Mr. Norman Ford (Sec.-Treas.), Mr. John McKellar, and Mr. William Moore.

An acre of wooded land for site of new school was purchased from Mr. William Wilson on Lot C, Con.12, on Silver Street, for \$60.00, and the contract for the new building was let to Daniel McLaren, of Rodney. The land was cleared by Henry Barnhart. The school was a frame structure 36 feet by 26 feet, on a stone foundation, and the cost was \$800.00. The sum of \$24.81 was received from Hector and Lachlan Paterson for the old red school of S.S.No.4. Mr. Norman Ford made the first window blinds for this school and it was opened in September 1874.

This new section was quite large and during its earliest years